

Take a tour of imperial watering holes.

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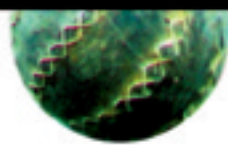
Sheng Zhaohong resigns at 55 as a department director of China Unicom to start his own business.

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World Cup 2002 fever builds at the Great Wall, courtesy of a familiar face.

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Desert Vents Fury

But city ready and waiting

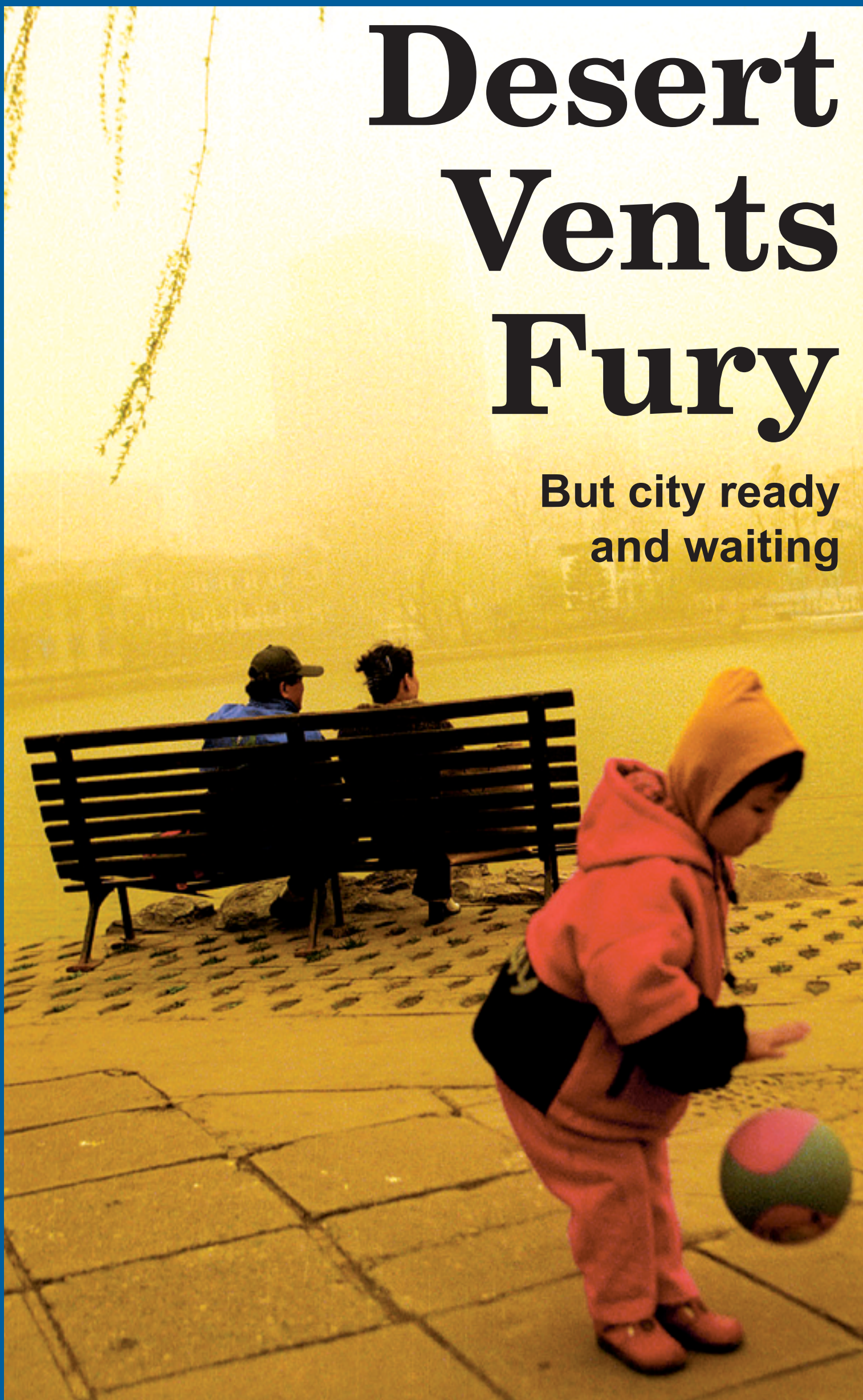


Photo by Lucky

By Alicia Xiao

This time, they were ready. The meteorologists had predicted a yellow sand cloud would envelope the city on Wednesday.

Envelope the city it did, cutting visibility to less than 100 meters.

"It is the most intensive and longest sandstorm to hit North China this spring, and possibly the strongest one in the past 10 years," said Li Yanxiang, chief weather forecaster of the China Central Meteorological Station.

Experts said storms might come again in April. "Actually, sandstorms cannot possibly be avoided as a 200,000-square-kilometer desert extends from Hebei Province to Inner Mongolia," said Ma Wenyan, an expert in counter-desertification studies.

As their national leaders took center stage, Beijing Meteorological Observatory officials could sit back and breathe a sigh of relief.

Last year's 10 millimeter snowstorm, the "December 7 Gridlock" had caught the whole city off guard. But the apocalyptic skyline that greeted Beijingers on Wednesday came as no surprise.

The serious sandstorm has swept Gansu, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Shanxi, Shaanxi, Hebei, Beijing and Tianjin in northwest and north China since Tuesday, affecting an area of 1.4 million square kilometers.

Three sandstorm warnings have been consecutively made by the China Central Meteorological Station this spring, the most ever in a single year.

In some areas of northwest China, the sandstorm even reduced visibility to zero. At the same time, the temperature in Gansu province's Hexi Corridor dropped sharply by 12 to 19 degrees Celsius. Snow followed.

Few pedestrians could be seen in Beijing's streets on Wednesday, but the number of traffic policemen was increased, to ensure that the expressways and airport remained in operation.

Along with the storm warnings, the municipal government and information service departments took emergency measures to minimize the damage from the flying sand.

An emergency circular was issued to stop outside work in elevated areas, and construction sites were warned to be effectively covered, according to the Municipal Construction Commission.

No serious accidents were reported as the local traffic administrations increased supervision. The storm did not affect takeoffs and landings at the Capital Airport, although the visibility in certain areas of Beijing was no more than 100 meters.

Experts from the State Bureau of Environmental Protection said the sandstorm originated from the desert in the northwest of Mongolia. Although the cold air brought some rainfall to Beijing Wednesday morning, which helped to control local dust, it failed to stop the strong sandstorm.

"The successful forecast of the storm was due to the combined efforts of the nationwide sandstorm monitoring and warning network. Remote sensing supervision from satellites also helped a great deal," said Li Yanxiang.

Although the meteorological department had forecast the sandstorm on Tuesday and warned citizens to prepare for it, many people were still shocked by the yellow sky on Wednesday morning.

Wang Hongsheng, a citizen living in Beijing for more than 60 years, said such weather had seldom been seen in the city in recent years. "I remember seeing such sandstorms in the old days."

The sandstorm weather in Beijing has decreased in recent years. According to the records of the Beijing Meteorological Archives Center, the average number of sandstorms per year was 31.1 in the 1950s, 16.5 in the 1970s, 12.3 in the 1980s and only 5.3 in the 1990s. Therefore, compared to the 1950s, sandstorms have hit the capital only one-sixth as frequently as in the past.

(See Sandstorm Concerns Foreign Residents, page 2)

Storm Comes Late

Not keeping to its regular schedule, the storm did not hit Beijing during the two-week annual sessions of China's top legislative and political advisory bodies, which lasted until mid-March.

Stable weather conditions and the absence of strong winds explain the late arrival of storms this year, said Zhang Guocai, director of the National Meteorological Center.

Other experts disagree however. Ma Wenyan, an expert in counter-desertification studies, attributes the late coming sandstorms to the warm winter.

The strong wind that blew on March 15 and 16 brought the year's first dusty weather in north China, but the chill factor was not strong enough to cause a serious sandstorm, he added.

Forestation is by far the most effective means to prevent or reduce their occurrence, say experts. China has a plan to curb desertification in ten years by reining in sands, planting trees, reclaiming more farming land and preserving pastures in north China.

Beijing has also decided to speed up construction of more "green screens" to fend off sands coming from the northwest.

(Xinhua)

Forbidden City to Restore Forgotten Former Splendor

By Miao Yajie

A forbidden zone of the Forbidden City will open to tourists after a six-year, 700 million yuan facelift is completed in 2008.

The management authorities plan to renovate the 582-year-old buildings in areas already closed to the public before the 2008 Olympics. But tourism business will continue unaffected, according to the latest press release from the State Cultural Relics Bureau and the Palace Museum.

Wuying Hall is the first site for restoration. As problems arise during renovation, experts will evaluate and solve problems with one eye to the whole project. The Wuying Hall, Cining Palace and Shoukang Palace on the west side of the Forbidden

City are the early targets for experts arguing over the blueprint details. "The colored paintings on the Wuying Hall were done during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911)," said Jin Hongkui, deputy director of the Department for Protection of Cultural Heritage from the bureau.

"If we get rid of the paintings totally and repaint it,

it won't take long. But that's definitely not the case with repairing ancient architecture."

Wuying Hall is on the same horizontal line to the west of the Gate of the Supreme Harmony. The Collection of Books Ancient and Present was compiled in this hall in the 17th century. The Cining Palace and Shoukang Palace were residential ar-

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Paint flakes tell the story

Photo by Gloom

Sandstorm Concerns Foreign Residents

The sandstorm sweeping northern China has aroused the concern of many foreigners living in the city, who are appealing for better international cooperation to deal with the sand.

"This is the most severe sandstorm I have ever seen in China. As far as I know, the situation was even worse decades ago. A sandstorm coming from Siberia and Mongolia can even affect North America," said Bruce J. Eichman, Chinese manager of Raytheon

International Inc.

He said joint efforts should be taken to transform desert areas and to plant trees in order to minimize the effects of sandstorms.

"I was a bit excited when I first saw the sandstorm here, but when I crossed the road, I felt the strength of the wind. A layer of sand covered the car when I walked near. Maybe I should wear a mask next time I go out," said Phan Mau Tien, general manager of Vietnam Airlines Beijing office.

He said a sandstorm warning system should be set up to remind citizens of necessary precautions.

"The sandstorm in 2000 impressed me," said Mario Alzugaray Rodriguez, second secretary of Cuban Embassy in China.

"I heard some southern Chinese provinces were also affected by the sandstorm. During the storm, I tried to stay in the office, avoiding outdoor activities," said Mario.

The worsening environment was a common international issue, said Isabel Ramallo, press and information officer for the delegation of the European Commission of the European Union (EU) in China.

She said the EU was willing to tackle the issue together with China.

In recent years, foreign companies such as Volkswagen have planted trees in the suburbs of Beijing, hoping to create a much

greener city. Most foreign residents show the same concern for the environment as local Beijing people.

"Harsh reality tells us that economic development cannot be based on the sacrifice of the environment. On the contrary, economic growth should provide material support for the environment," said Richard Liu, chief representative of the Canadian Tourism Commission in China.

(Xinhua)

Down Under Beijing

By Wang Dandan

Most people have heard about the massive network of tunnels under the capital, which were dug for military use in the 1960s. Until recently, no one knew for sure how extensive the tunnel system was.

So after five months of investigation by the Beijing Municipal Government, experts have found 20,740 underground tunnels with an area equal to that of the city of Beijing (above ground) in 1950.

After investigating, the government has set up an individual file for every tunnel, and designated a person responsible to manage it. In addition, the government is working on a computer software system to regulate the underground area. The system will be linked with the Beijing Municipal Security Management Office. They are also starting to set up specific underground regulations. Presently, 2,768 tunnels have problems with fire protection and security. Some of them are even used as illegal businesses and residences.

Life Insurance Faces New Rules

By Wang Dandan

Beijing Insurance Supervision Association will launch five regulations regarding life insurance, said Song Peng, press release manager of the association.

The association has five regulations:

1. Any life insurance companies in Beijing should register at the association before they start a new type of insurance.
2. It is prohibited to use exaggerated descriptions of life insurance profits on the advertisement. It is also important to indicate clearly to the purchasers the risks of purchasing the new type of insurance if there is any.
3. Life insurance companies should state in the contract how much of the premium will be returned to the purchaser, if the insurance is cancelled. They should also state clearly the responsibilities of each party.
4. Companies must strive to improve the insurance employees' professional skills and ethics.
5. Beijing's insurance industry will start to blacklist those employees who deliberately mislead customers, which will render the person unemployable in the industry.

Online Diploma to be Improved

By Xiao Rong

A photo recognition function will be added to China's first higher education diploma online registration and verification system.

The system, aiming to prevent forged certificates, enables prospective employers to double check employee's credentials by entering their names and registration numbers into an online database of universities nationwide.

Forgers can still cheat the system, however, by using genuine graduates' information to fabricate diplomas with their own photos. This flaw has made the system suspect, since the website's last December launch.

The improvement requires both color photos and ID card numbers of graduates to be registered on-line together with the original diploma information to minimize the possibility of the above-mentioned forgery.

A total of 4 million higher education diplomas will be registered on-line this year, according to the Ministry of Education. Over 13 million graduates from the last ten years have yet to be registered.

Gas Tears

By Shan Jinliang

A US medical expert weeps before the victims wall in Yiwu City of Zhejiang Province.

Mark Fa Lan Zi Bu Lao [pinyin] and US historian Xie Er Dun [pinyin] Harris conducted the first international systematic and professional research on the Japanese gas war in China.

They went to Jinhua and Quzhou of Zhejiang, to collect their evidence, escorted by Wang Xuan, director of a delegation of gas war victims.

Other scholars of Shanghai and Nanjing colleges also travelled with the duo.

The gas war by Japanese is estimated to have caused 60,000 Chinese deaths since October 1940.

The Americans will make a report to international human rights and medical organizations.

(Xinhua Photo)



Economist Questions Domestic Aviation Insurance

By Xiao Rong

After a famous economist questioned the colossal profit of aviation insurance on Tuesday, *Beijing Youth Daily* conducted an investigation into his claim.

Domestic passengers in China are usually told to pay an extra 20-yuan premium when buying an airplane ticket. However, it was discovered that an airplane ticket already includes aviation insurance, but few passengers are told of this.

Mao Yushi, the economist, questioned the colossal profit gained through this extra fee.

"With about 80 million airplane passengers in the last two years, the sales volume totals a staggering 1.6 billion yuan. Since there haven't been many serious domestic accidents during this time, the gross profit may amount to as much as 1.4 billion yuan," said Mao.

Passengers who fly domestically have a maximum insurance

indemnity of seventy thousand yuan from the insurance included in their tickets, according to State Council stipulations. For international airlines, a maximum insurance indemnity of one hundred thousand dollars is required by the Warsaw Treaty. Though China has already joined the Warsaw Treaty, only international airlines follow the practice, said an international aviation expert.

Most passengers agreed with Mao's view that the aviation

insurance, though advisable to buy, should be explained more clearly.

Some insurance experts, however, expressed opposite ideas. "Most of the profit of insurance companies actually goes to insurance funds which are the basis of insurance indemnities. Once an aviation disaster happens, most of the funds of the company will have to be used up," said Hao Yansu, professor of the Central Financial University.

Other experts hold the view that insurance plans and services should fully consider the interests of consumers and remain open to the public.

"It is acceptable that insurance companies should earn money and put certain profits into their funds, but that doesn't mean they should violate market rules. The accumulation of insurance funds depends not on a monopoly but on improving management efficiency," Mao emphasized.

Sleep Survey Awakes You

By Xiao Rong

A Sleep Epidemiological Survey kicked off in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hangzhou yesterday, March 21 - World Sleep Day.

Aiming to increase public awareness on sleep quality as well as on diagnosis and treatment of insomnia, the survey is an important part of an international project to be carried out in over 20 countries and regions. It was initiated last year by the International Foundation for Mental Health and Neuroscience.

Under the sole sponsorship of Hangzhou Sanofi-Synthelabo Minsheng Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. and the support of Chinese Medical Association, the survey is the first of its kind in China for the World Sleep Day.

A total of 10,000 people in the four cities will be surveyed, covering one fifth of the total samples worldwide. Pedestrians, patients outside various clinics and any volunteers are welcome to fill out the questionnaire.

Wangfujing, Zhongguancun, Xizhimen and Shuang'an Market will be the first sites in the capital where the questionnaire is distributed.

The survey, based on two world-recognized professional tests, has questions

on working conditions, routine sleep, ways to solve sleep disorder, medical treatment to insomnia, physical responses and self assessment.

All the statistics will be put in a global database of sleep conditions, and the outcome is to be announced by the third quarter of this year.

Besides the sleep survey, educational programs on sleep and health, like free consultation for the public to communicate with specialists, will also be organized in the four cities.

"We choose Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hangzhou as our targeted cities in China because they boast rapid economic development, which consequently brings about more pressure on modern people and may affect their sleep quality," Mr. Ivan Tjong-A-Hung, marketing director of Sanofi-Synthelabo Co, told *Beijing Today*.

He added that the four cities are consisted of inhabitants of diversified origins, which are advantageous for the survey.

"The theme of this World Sleep Day is 'Open your Eyes to Sleep', so that most of the people worldwide can realize the importance of sleep to our health," said Ms. Zong Shujie, vice president and secretary general of Chinese Medical Association.



The logo of the 2002 World Sleep Day

Students Take Off to Space Camp

By Zhao Hongyi

All six students and their teacher from the High School Affiliated to Beijing University will fly to Britain on March 24 to attend "Space School, UK" at the University of Leicester for one week.

Thanks to School Links, a cultural exchange project operated by the Cultural & Education Section of the British Embassy in Beijing, the students will learn about space science and participate in realistic space activities, including a simulated space mission at the Challenger Learning Center attached to the UK's National Space Center. The Center is one of the top research and development establishments for remote sensing and radio telescopes, two fields where Britain is a center of excellence.

The British Council, which operates in China as the Cultural & Education Section of the British Embassy, held a sending off ceremony in Beijing on March 18.

"I am sure that this trip will play an important impact on our lives and future careers, though it's hard to say how, right now," said Yu Qianmeng. "Maybe someday in the future I will go to study in Britain, who knows?"

"Of course it is great to have such a chance to visit the center and have communication with British students face to face in Britain!" added A Geruo, a Mongolian boy who was both shy and excited



The six students hold their self-designed trip flag at the sending off ceremony held by the British Embassy in Beijing

Photo By Ayi

at the same time.

The students who complete the visit and learning course will be invited to join the Friends of Space School (FOSS), a Space School Alumni organization, which enables students worldwide to keep contacts and make life-long friends.

"We are currently helping the Beijing Planetarium to build a Space School in Beijing to attract students worldwide to visit, study and communicate with their mates in China," said Keith Davis, First Secretary and British Council Deputy Director in the British Embassy in Beijing.

Wall's and Nestlé Gear up for Summer Campaign

By Xiao Rong

Wall's China, an ice cream producer, announced a 150-million-yuan investment in brand promotion at its 2002 product promotion conference Monday.

"We are very confident about the potential of the Chinese ice cream market. Our consumer-oriented and innovation-focused policy is sure to further increase our market share," said Peter ter-Kulve, general manager of Walls China.

Wall's sales volume increased by 60% in Beijing last year and 200% in the Shanghai area. The five Wall's chain stores also gained wide popularity in the two cities.

When asked to comment on the recent bankruptcy of Beijing Meadow Gold, once one of the top local ice cream producers, Kulve said he was sad to hear the news and attributed the company's failure to lack of innovation.

"It's through persistent innovation and quality strategies that Wall's has played a leading role in instant consuming products," he emphasized.

A series of new flavors have been added this year to Wall's top sellers Magnum, Paddle Pop, Cornetto and Carte D'or, to suit Chinese consumers' tastes.

Also on Monday, Nestlé, another ice cream giant, promoted its 2002 series of new products targeted at Chinese tastes.

Both companies emphasize the importance of innovation in the long-term market competition.

R&D and advertising are the other main focuses for Wall's, besides product innovation. A total of 150 million yuan will be poured into the two fields, 50 million more than last year.

"It's a good thing for both the ice cream giants to value customer tastes, for we always welcome new flavors, and we can really look forward to a cool and delicious summer," said Miss Jiang, an ice cream lover.

Discovery Channel Negotiating for 24-7 Coverage

By Yang Xiao

Neville Meijers, vice-president and managing director of Discovery Networks Asia, said in Beijing Tuesday that Discovery Channel is negotiating with the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT) on the possibility of broadcasting its 24 hours a day, seven days a week (24-7) programs in the Pearl River Delta. "We have to say our negotiation is at an elementary stage," said Meijers.

The two media giants AOL-Time Warner and News Corp received permission to broadcast to the region last year. Currently there are a number of foreign media groups negotiating with SARFT for access to the Chinese market.

Discovery Channel has reached agreements with 22 provincial-level TV stations on broadcasting its programs one or two hours a day. According to current policies, foreign 24-7 TV programming is not permitted in China.

At the press conference, Discovery Networks Asia launched its New Film Maker Plan, which aims to find young directors with potential. Discovery will choose six winners in the Chinese mainland, SAR and Macao. The winners will receive a two-day training course in Singapore and about 180,000 yuan to make a 30-minute documentary film.

Anyone interested in applying can send an E-mail including a proposal for a documentary to Nicole_lee@bj.bm.com before 5pm, April 20. For more information, visit www.china.discovery.com.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

HP-CPQ Merger Gets Go-ahead Shake-up for Beijing Senior Management

By James Young

HP CEO Carly Fiorina announced a narrow victory Tuesday after a bitterly fought shareholder vote on the acquisition of Compaq Computer. As expected, Compaq Computer shareholders approved the deal the next day.

Before the news was announced in Beijing, there were media reports that both president of HP China Cheng-Yaw Sun and Compaq's managing director Alex Lee had resigned.

Lee maintains that his resignation is not related to the merger, telling the press that he "just wanted to further his career development." His duties have been temporarily taken over by Philip Yu, president of Compaq Greater China division. Yu says he has no idea who the new chief will be, but admits that the merger will certainly lead to some human resources "adjustments." A number of employees have already resigned.

Meanwhile Southern Metropolitan News reported that HP's Cheng-Yaw Sun had quit. After several hours HP denied the rumor. It said there had been no change in the senior management team, though the merger was expected to cause layoffs of around 15,000 people worldwide. HP and Compaq intend to set up a committee to resolve the human resource integration.

Fiorina, who staked her job on the merger, told a press conference in California after the HP shareholder meeting to vote on the \$20 billion deal that the margin of victory was "slim but sufficient."

The new company will have more than \$80 billion in revenue and sell everything from PCs and

printers to large computer servers to better compete with No. 1 computer maker IBM.

Walter Hewlett, son of HP founder Bill Hewlett, said immediately after the vote that the race was too close to call and the results would not be known for weeks. A spokesman for Hewlett, who bitterly opposed the merger, later put the margin of victory at less than half a percentage point.

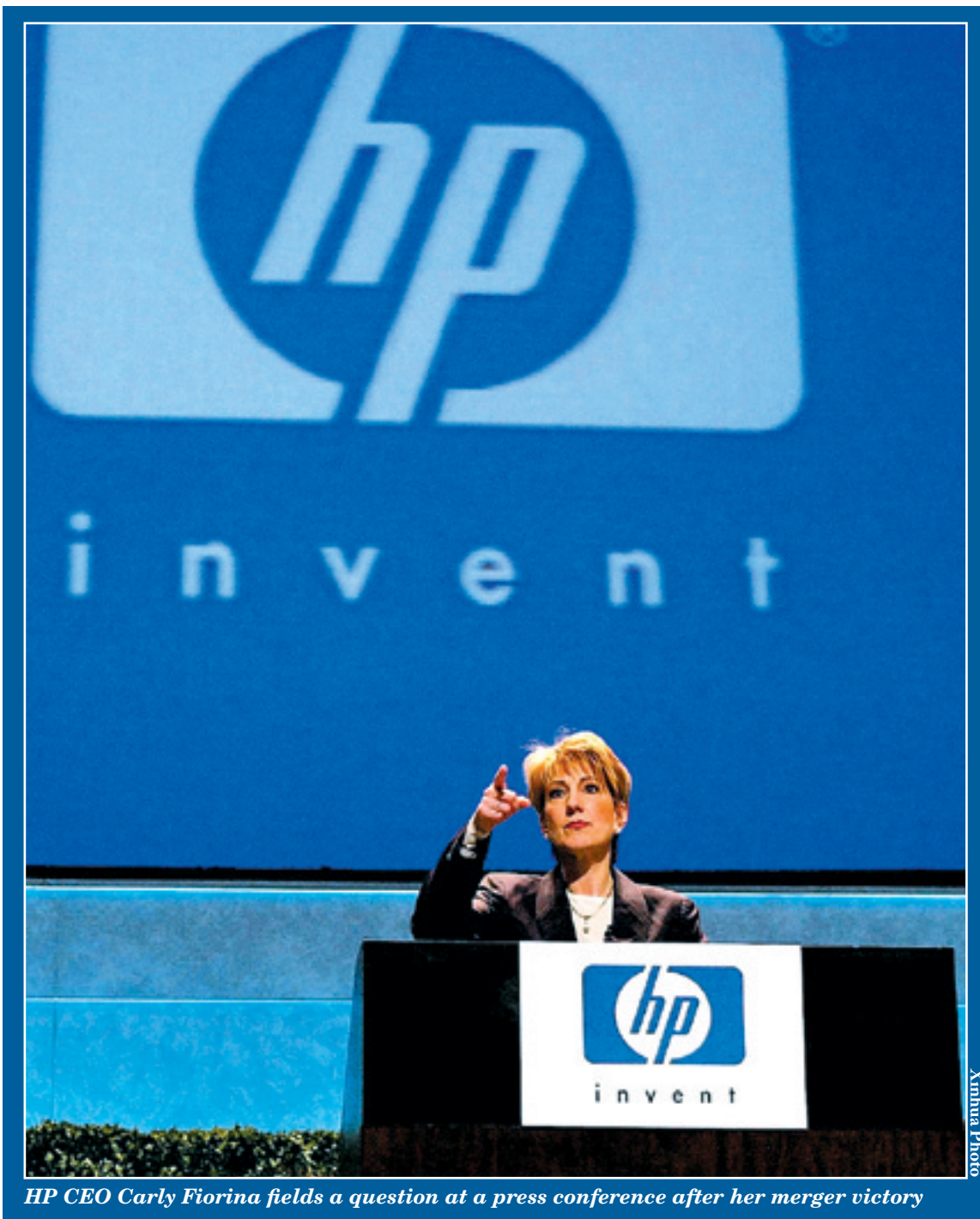
An ebullient Compaq CEO Michael Capellas said in a conference call after the meeting that shareholders appeared to have voted 9-to-1 in favor of the deal, adding that soon the heavy lifting of putting the two companies together would begin.

Compaq alone spent slightly more than \$50 million on merger-related expenses in the past six months. "There was a lot of advertising," Capellas said. Sources estimated that HP may have spent up to \$100 million on the project.

HP's stock has fallen 19 percent since the merger was first announced on September 3, while Compaq shares have dropped 10 percent. IBM shares rose seven percent in the same period. The drop in HP stock has brought the value of the deal down from the original \$25 billion.

The companies will have to wait to begin their integration, however, while the final votes are tallied. The two firms counting the ballots must check the votes of some 900,000 stockholders, many of whom could have voted more than once.

On Tuesday, Compaq gained 78 cents to \$11.14 while HP fell 45 cents to \$18.80. With HP at that level, the deal terms imply Compaq shares should trade at \$11.89.



HP CEO Carly Fiorina fields a question at a press conference after her merger victory

HOME APPLIANCE INDUSTRY

DVD Makers Challenged by Overseas Giants

By Wang Dandan

The European Union announcement of plans to slap a \$20 patent fee on each Chinese Digital Video Disc (DVD) player has shaken up the local industry.

The EU's move stems from a decision by Phillips, one of the developers of DVD technology, to take action against DVD products worldwide for which patent fees have not been paid. In China, there are over 100 DVD manufacturers licensed to export DVD players to the EU. Phillips says that in accordance with European Parliament bill 3259/94, which covers goods that impinge on intellectual property rights, it had applied to several EU member countries to confiscate DVD players and related products containing unlicensed parts.

As early as June 1999, six companies; Hitachi, Panasonic, Mitsubishi, Times-Warner, Toshiba and JVC formed a "DVD Patent Alliance" known as 6C. The group said that any manufacturer that used core technologies owned by its members should

purchase the patent from 6C. They say the announcement is reasonable and non-discriminating; pointing out that it applies to all countries, not only China.

Problem lies in fees standard

In response to the announcement, the Ministry of Information Industry and China Audiovisual Association organized a meeting on DVD intellectual property rights in Shanghai. Over 20 leading domestic DVD player manufacturers attended.

Manufacturers attending the meeting all agreed they should pay a patent fee, as China has already entered the WTO and should abide by international rules; however they disagreed over the standard of the fee, which they argued was too high.

According to an announcement 6C made in 1999, DVD manufacturers should pay 0.4% of the net selling price of each DVD and \$0.75 per DVD disc. This equates to at least 100 - 200 yuan (12 -\$25) per player. The sudden increase will have a serious impact on the DVD

market, said Xu Guofu, deputy director of Jinzheng DVD Company.

Who should pay the patent fee?

According to Xu, DVD production is an industry chain. Nearly all domestic core parts of DVD players are imported. When Chinese companies purchased these core parts, they were not told that they should pay another patent fee, so 6C should demand the companies that supply the core parts to pay the fee.

Even so, most local companies consider the problem to be in the fee standard and have already entrusted the China Audiovisual Association to negotiate a more reasonable price with 6C.

Levy points to lack of core technologies in domestic companies

China is the largest DVD manufacture in the world, with over 4 million units of DVD players sold in 2001. This year the number is expected to reach 8 million, accounting for almost 1/4 of the global market.

The imposition of the levy

shows that it is important not only to enlarge market share, but to possess core technology. Chinese companies should improve research and development in these areas. Although such development is expensive and time consuming, the results are worth it.

The Chinese government is working to establish a new DVD standard. Any imported foreign DVD players should accord with

this Chinese standard.

As the industries based on intellectual properties begin to play key roles in national growth, intellectual property rights have surfaced as a key issue in international trade.

In the knowledge-based society, the most revolutionary changes will be made in the standard of the intellectual property more than any other field.



China is the largest DVD manufacture in the world, with over 4 million units of DVD players sold in 2001

Photo by Cui Hao

AVIATION INDUSTRY

Business Normalizing for United and Northwest

By Yang Xiao

With the U.S. economy showing signs of recovery, some major airline companies are looking to resuming business in China. Sidney Kwok, General manager of United Airlines (China), Monday announced the resumption of the daily non-stop Beijing-Chicago service, which was suspended in early February.

Kwok said the route, which prior to the September 11 terrorist attack accounted for one third of the company's business in the

Chinese mainland, "will be reinstated on April 7, and will offer even better connections for travelers in China." The Beijing-Chicago service will depart Beijing daily at 4:35pm, arriving in Chicago at 4:35pm, the same time on the same day.

The September 11 terrorist attack had a dramatic impact on United. Two of the airline's planes were among those hijacked. Following the attack, headquarters announced a cut of 20,000 employees, and began cutting or sus-

pending flights worldwide. The loss in its 2001 fiscal year annual report came as a surprise to no one.

However in 2002, USA Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan's monetary policies seem to be having their desired effects. United's rival Northwest Airlines has again started promoting its China routes. Northwest was the first airline to launch direct flights between China and the U.S. One unnamed source at Northwest's China office commented that

Northwest has also seen signs of recovery and is implementing new marketing strategies. "Flights to Hawaii is one of the programs, in cooperation with travel agencies. They are providing discount air tickets to travel agencies, which is expected to help increase sales."

United also expect to see a recovery, especially in the Chinese market. Sales income from the greater Chinese market accounted for 5% of United's total revenues in 2001.

"Nationwide Road Show 2002",

which kicked off in Beijing this Monday is another strategy of the airline to boost its business here. The one-month-long road show aims to educate the growing number of Chinese customers about United's air services and improve service to US-bound travelers through face-to-face communications with the local media, travel agencies and partners. After Beijing, the road show will head to other major cities including Shenyang, Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Shanghai, Chengdu and Xi'an.

Investors Invited to See Portfolio

City clarifies conditions for foreign capital, defines new sectors of interest

By Zhao Hongyi

Multinational representatives were invited to attend the press conference held by the municipal government as the city opened industries to investment on March 18.

New areas named included:

- Project engineering and technical consultancy;
- Business and investment management consultancy;
- Public relations and design;

- Vocational training;
- Equipment maintenance and repair;
- Restaurant services;
- Real estate property maintenance and development;
- Residential community services.

Overseas companies were invited to participate by means of solely owned enterprises, rather than joint ventures or cooperative ventures at the conference.

Modern logistic channels, chain retail stores, e-commerce are also top priorities for inviting foreign investment, said Zhou He, deputy director-general of the municipal foreign economic relations and trade commission.

The municipality, he said, will also seek overseas capital and management in the telecommunications industry, Sino-foreign travel & tourism joint ventures, construction and management of

tourism sites.

Senior financing, accounting and legal management professionals will be the top targets for the city to introduce in the next few years. Foreign chambers of business are welcomed to place their regional centers in Beijing.

The government expressed its determination to further raise customs clearance efficiency, regulate market practices and counter fake products, commodities

and the infringement of intellectual property rights.

China will recommend and help the best foreign companies list on the domestic stock market, an official at the press conference said.

“The decision to open areas to overseas investment are made strictly in line with foreign investment guidance drafted by the central government and to be promulgated on April 1 this year,” said Zhou.

Domestic Bank Starts Foreign Currency Business

By Wang Dandan

The first Chinese-foreign financial joint venture in China has obtained approval to engage in foreign currency business with Chinese citizens after the newly amended “Rules of People’s Republic of China on Foreign Financial Organizations”.

Established on November 28, 1985, Xianmen International Bank is the first of its kind on Chinese mainland. The bank, again first of its kind, received approval from the People’s Bank of China and will provide foreign currency savings, loans and exchange to local citizens. Savings interest will be in accordance with the daily published foreign currency interest rates by the Bank of China, thus interest is flexible according to individual cases.

Each foreign bank should possess at least 300 million yuan funds to apply to provide foreign fund services to Chinese citizens.

When the application is through, the bank will extend its foreign currency business scope from partial to total, which means that the target clients are enlarged to Chinese and foreign companies, foreign organizations, organizations from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan area and individual foreigners, Chinese and people living in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan area.

It offers a good chance for foreign banks in China to compete, said Fang Xiao, deputy director of Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corporation.

Although foreign banks cannot compete with domestic banks in terms of office numbers, it will not be long before Chinese citizens conduct services via the telephone, mobile phone and Internet, said Fang.

Xiamen International Bank is jointly held by Fujian International Trust and Investment Corp, Xiamen Construction and Development Corp., Minxin Holdings, and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. Foreign holders include Asian Development Bank, Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan, and Sino Finance Group in US.

Citibank Bags Basket of Dollars and Renminbi

Citibank has become the first foreign bank allowed to deal both Renminbi and foreign exchange business for Chinese customers on the Chinese mainland, a bank source said Wednesday.

The Shanghai branch of Citibank in western Pudong has undergone a facelift and is expected to open to customers Thursday.

Richard Stanley, head of the bank’s business in China, said his bank had been yearning to provide a high quality service for Chinese citizens and he was glad to see the goal realized.

A Chinese analyst said the move marks real competition between Chinese and foreign banks in Shanghai. (Xinhua)



A company from Dalian presents their street sculpture product at a booth during the seventh International Construction, Building Materials & Urban Services Exhibition opened in Beijing on Wednesday.

More than 800 enterprises from home and abroad attended the exhibition for access to the construction projects Beijing will launch for the 2008 Olympic Games. (Xinhua Photo)



Photo by Zhuang Jian/Text by Zhao Hongyi

Euro Daddy Drops by City

Robert Mondale, “Father of the Euro” and winner of the 1999 Nobel Award for Economics, came to Beijing this week.

The University of Columbia professor gave his lecture “Currency Blocs vs. Trade Blocs – China in the World Economy”, to students in the University of International Business and Economy on Wednesday,

March 19.

The euro has experienced a smooth transition also in China.

China’s State Administration of Foreign Exchange announced the same day that it has given the go-ahead for the China Foreign Exchange Trading Center to open trading between the Renminbi and the euro.

Supermarkets Label GM Food

By Shan Jinliang

As of Wednesday, genetically modified (GM) products will be labeled in supermarkets, in line with regulations concerning GM food released by the Ministry of Agriculture in May.

“The label is to enhance management of the market and let our consumers know what they are eating,” said Luo Yunbo, dean of the School of Food Research of China Agricultural University.

The “GM Food” label applies to beans, Cole, corn and tomatoes. The regulation will hit American beans,

70% of which are genetically modified. The US annually produces more than 55 million tons of genetically modified beans, 70% of its overall volume.

China consumes 21 million tons of beans a year, producing 15 million. Imports have risen 20-30% annually.

With WTO, that figure will rise further as China abolishes protective tariffs. What matters most is that the beans are tested at destination rather than origin, Tuesday’s *Beijing Morning Post* reported.

“Trade with US beans has a high risk because

they may not be able to be unloaded due to quarantine problems,” the paper said.

The regulation stipulates all companies exporting GM food to China must apply to the Ministry of Agriculture and indicate whether the product endangers human, animals or the environment. The ministry will answer within 270 days.

“The GM food in the market is supposed to be safe as it has been tested before it enters the market,” said Luo.

Genetic modification technology allows genes to transfer within different species.

Some scientists argue genetically modified crops could be the key to richer wildlife and efficient food production.

Others worry GM crops disturb the natural balance and have, as yet, unknown health consequences. The potential health effects of genetically modified foods should be rigorously investigated before allowing them into baby food or to be marketed to pregnant or breast feeding women, the elderly, and those with chronic disease, according to a recent report by the Royal Society of England.

Andersen China: Crisis? What Crisis?

By Zhao Hongyi

Buffeted by the Enron scandal, the 94-year-old company Arthur Andersen is reportedly on the brink of collapse. But its offices in Beijing and Shanghai both claim business as usual.

“Andersen China has professional techniques in account processing and high credit in the region,” said Chen Nanyan, a public relations official of Andersen Beijing.

Since Enron’s bankruptcy claim last year, she said, Andersen China had retained its Chinese customers including China Unicom and China National Offshore Oil Corp.

Reports suggest Andersen

has suffered employee and client defections and is facing probable criminal indictment after revelations that its company directors ordered destruction of Enron documents last autumn. The once-mighty accounting firm hopes to stop an exodus of clients and employees, and find a buyer to salvage its operation.

On March 12, Andersen was reported in negotiations with Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, another of the “Big Five” accounting firms in the world. But the marriage failed.

According to the March 18 issue of *USA Today*, people in touch with senior Andersen

partners say, some prefer the Switzerland registered Andersen World Wide, the head company that owns all Arthur Andersen accounting firms around the world, to ditch its consulting practice and stick to auditing.

On the same day, the Chinese News Service said the Shanghai-based Arthur Andersen China office released a statement saying that, invested and managed by Andersen Hong Kong, it is independent from Andersen US offices. What happened in the USA has no direct influence on their business in China, the company said.

But the company also said ambiguously in the statement

that its headquarters is in contact with relevant parties for future business development and will give a clearer picture of any settlement in the near future.

When *Beijing Today* contacted Andersen Beijing, sources at the company said a merger or sale might involve Andersen World Wide.

Reports yesterday suggested Arthur Andersen’s non-U.S. businesses plan to combine with KPMG International. Meanwhile, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, Ernest & Young and PriceWaterhouseCoopers, the other three of the “Big Five” declared they would never discuss business acquisition with Andersen.

Taiwan Banks Land on Mainland

By Zhao Hongyi

Two commercial banks from Taiwan have landed on the Chinese mainland. United World Chinese Commercial Bank and Chang Hwa Bank have become the first two commercial banks from Taiwan to operate business on the mainland.

People’s Bank of China disclosed another six Taiwan commercial banks are applying. Reports say the United World Chinese Commercial Bank will open its office in Shanghai as early as next month, while Chang Hwa will operate in Kunshan. But no exact date has yet been disclosed.

Kunshan is an increasingly important industrial and commercial city in the southern part of Jiangsu province, neighboring Shanghai. The city is also famous for its investors and enterprises from Taiwan.

Foreign Banks Profit in Tianjin

Foreign banks in Tianjin reported \$178.6 million profits in 2001, a turnaround after years of losses, announced Liu Chongming, director of the Tianjin branch of the People’s Bank of China at a recent meeting with managers of local foreign banks.

There are 14 branches and five representatives of foreign banks in Tianjin. Statistics show normal assets of local branches of foreign banks increased 19.88 percent in 2001. Non-performing assets decreased 5.67 percent.

Fast-developing business services provided by foreign banks included the introduction of credit cards. Six foreign banks in Tianjin have filed applications to provide Renminbi services, said a People’s Bank Tianjin official. (Xinhua)

Beijing University Boosts Business

By Zhao Hongyi

The number one institute in China signed an agreement with Fuqua School of Business at Duke University and the Educational & Cultural Foundation, both from the United States, to launch an International Masters of Business Administration (MBA) project in Beijing this week.

Wang Jianguo, MBA project manager of Guanghua School of Management, said his school and Beijing University have great hopes for the Fuqua School, which ranks first in executive programs and fifth in terms of MBA programs worldwide.

Xuanwu to Build Media Avenue

By Zhao Hongyi

Xuanwu District wants to establish a 28 billion yuan international media avenue at its heart. The laying of a foundation stone for the future Beijing Mobilecom Caishikou building at the southwest junction of Caishikou on March 15 set the media wheels in motion.

Upon completion, the 7,13.92 square-meter, six-story building will upgrade the district telecommunications network. The district authority plans the 370 meter-wide, 2 km-long avenue to start at Xuanwumen and end at the south Second Ring Road.

Xuanwu is one of the city’s nine districts.



Counselor Hotak visits the lions

Photo by Qu Liyan

By Sun Ming / Feng Yihua

A Badaling safari park has donated two African lions to Kabul Zoo to replace one-eyed Marjan, recently found dead in his cage.

Counselor Abdul Basir Hotak of the Afghanistan Embassy visited the lions on Tuesday and handed a note to park authorities expressing his government's appreciation.

The only lion in Kabul Zoo, Marjan survived

Lions to Fly to Kabul

wars, sieges, invasions and a grenade attack, before succumbing to old age on January 26. He was 30 years old.

Hearing of Marjan's demise, Badaling Wild Animal World decided to donate Zhuangzhuang and Kaini, both 18 months old.

"Young animals are better able to adapt to new environments," said Vice Manager Wang Wei. "Our little lion will have a chance of bearing cubs in Afghanistan next spring."

Lion keeper Wang Shuang said she was reluctant to see them leave. She told *Beijing Today* the lions might need time to adapt to the "foreign language" in Kabul.

"The climate in Kabul is similar to Beijing. So I don't worry about them too much. But I have to tell their feeder that they know it's time for dinner by knocking on the dishes."

The flight hasn't been booked yet. Before they leave, the lions must receive a thorough physical examination from China Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine.

"If all goes well, they will receive the examination next week," said Yi Feng, park manager.

Counselor Hotak said the zoo had been damaged during the war, but reconstruction was on track and that they received special cash for the lions' food and drink.

"Many heartfelt thanks to Chinese people," said Hotak. "We will take great care of Zhuangzhuang and Kaini in order that they will keep our two nations' friendship."

"The lion is brave and loyal, occupying a holy position in the Afghan people's heart. Kabul citizens are very glad to know from newspapers that the Chinese people will present little lions as a gift for Afghanistan."

Teenage Girls Hospitalized After Beating in School Office

By Zeng Peng

Four adults beat up two girls, one unconscious, in a school office in front of their powerless Chinese teacher before police came to the rescue.

The accused four, three of whom are relatives of a classmate of the victims, have been detained at Dong Cheng police station in Haidian District.

It allegedly began with a quarrel on March 11. When somebody came to the Tsing Hua Yu Cai Experimental High School dormitory asking after student Wang Yi, classmate Zhang Qian replied that she was dead, overheard by Wang next door. The two quarreled and a scuffle ensued.

That afternoon, Wang's mother, aunt, uncle-in-law and a man named Mr. Dong broke into the classroom during the Chinese class, summoning Zhang Qian and friend Cai Jing.

Teacher Chen Gang, witness to the whole incident, took all seven to the Political Instruction Office. Chen has stated that almost as soon as they entered the office, the four adults began to beat the girls.

Chen says she tried to intervene, but Mr. Dong shoved her to the ground. The four are then said to have beaten Zhang for more than 10 minutes before she fell unconscious. Regardless, the four continued to beat Zhang on the floor until the police arrived.

Cai was also beaten several times, but not as seriously as Zhang. She fainted two days later. Cai and Zhang both underwent physical examinations at Beijing Third Hospital. Zhang is recovering, but says she has an ache in her left ear.

"She is sometimes normal like nothing happened but sometimes muddle-headed, and sometimes even hysterical at the sight of a well-built man," said Zhang's mother Zhang Chun Ying.

The parents of both girls are preparing to sue Wang's relatives.

Wang's classmates broke her desk, burnt her schoolbag and said they will not attend class until Wang is expelled.

But according to an anonymous source at the Political Instruction Office of Tsing Hua Yu Cai Experimental High School, the authority has been trying to persuade Wang to return to school.

Wang's father Wang Wei Lin, who did not participate in the beating, said his daughter was the best student in the class. He alleged she had refused to help other students cheat in exercises and exams and so was often bullied.

Wang's father cried as he said the arrested adults were to blame, not his child.

My girl is also deeply hurt," he said. "A 17-year-old girl like her who dropped out of school can do nothing but stay at home."



"We are both winners!"

Xinhua Photo

Pele Scores on Great Wall

By Chen Ying

He was so excited that he jumped up and hugged one player of his team, Shang Lu. As the man Chinese call "qiu wang" or "football emperor", Pele scored with a header for his team after several rounds of "cu ju" (蹴鞠).

Pele and Chinese soccer coach Bora Milutinovic had needed no second invitation to join in an ancient Chinese football game at Badaling Great Wall in Beijing last week.

Early records suggest cu ju was played in China 4,600 years ago. The ball was a "ju", and the playing "cu". Cu ju became popular during the Song Dynasty (960-1279). FIFA has thus dubbed China a cradle of football.

More than 50 foreign media and 30 domestic media came to report the major credit card-sponsored event. The game was forced to end as the circus got out of control with cameras and lights intervening too much with normal play.

Pele and Milutinovic, the China coach, played cu ju to promote the 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan. The arrival of Pele and Milu made the football fans excited at Wengchang Square in Badaling Great Wall although it was blustery last Saturday afternoon. Fans shouted out their names.

Pele said he hoped China and Brazil can both reach the second round of the World Cup as both countries were drawn in the same group in Busan of South Korea last year. This idea earned not surprisingly, loud applause.

Playing cu ju was the absolutely necessary content of this activity. Wearing the clothes of the Song Dynasty, 14 young players from the Guo'an Football Club were separated into two groups and played cu ju according to the game rules at that time.

Their performance stirred Pele and Milutinovic's interest. Unwilling to lose the game, "Milu"

shot back at the king and he held up a finger on each hand to indicate a tie.

Pele said many foreign football fans will go to South Korea and Japan to watch the World Cup Final this June, "I hope before they go to

South Korea and Japan they stop here to see the beautiful country," he said.

PELE: FAST FACTS

PELE (born 1940). "Soccer in its purest form" was played by Pele, who led the Brazilian national soccer team to three World Cup victories in 1958, 1962 and 1970 and to permanent possession of the Jules Rimet Trophy.

He played in 1,363 matches and scored 1,282 goals. His best season was 1958, when he scored 139 times.



Photo by Gloom

Foreign Executive Saves Life of Lost Beijinger



Photo by Qu Liyan

By Ivy Zhang

It was about 6:30 pm after a typical workday as Procter & Gamble section head Robin Hall approached a Jingshun Road junction when he noticed something crumpled on the ground.

Hall told his driver Miss Ma to turn around. They returned and she parked the car.

Bunched up on the dirt, pale and shaking, lay a thin man in his late 40s or 50s. He wore a dirty old jacket and a hat.

"When I touched his arm, I could feel his bone -- no meat in his muscle. He can't speak. Only pointing at his mouth and body. The driver says what's the matter with you? Get up, get up!" said Hall.

With Ma's help, they picked him up. Hall found two pieces of old bread in the man's pocket.

He took him to a nearby restaurant. But the restaurant barred entry, saying the man was too dirty. Hall asked the restaurant to box some takeout food.

It was cold. Hall was wearing a thin shirt. They took the man straight to his home four kilometers away. "I gave this man bread, banana, vitamins, something to eat and a complete set of clean clothes."

Then they drove to Heping Hospital emergency room. When hospital office director Zhang Guozhu came to investigate, Hall called his wife.

A city resident for two years, Hall can speak some Chinese. He told Senka Hall to leave the restaurant where she was dining with a friend, go home and get help.

Mrs. Hall tagged Marina at the Beijing Riviera front desk to act as a translator. Marina, who left the company last week, got the story across to Zhang via the phone. Zhang called the police. Hall offered to pay 500 yuan towards medical expenses and Zhang said anything left over would be refunded.

Hall went home about 10 pm. "We gave the best medicine at our hospital to this

man," Zhang told *Beijing Today*. Fearing the worst, Cuigezhuang police officers Jin Hui and Liao Wenli maintained an overnight vigil.

Next morning, Hall's 39th birthday, police called to say they had found the man's family. The crying sister and brother met Hall at the station.

Police drove them all to the hospital where Wang Zhongsheng had been moved to a different ward.

Wang was diagnosed as suffering from dehydration, but otherwise in satisfactory condition. He could take small bites of a banana. The hospital refunded Hall his entire 500 yuan, which he gave to Wang Xiuying and brother Wang Zhonglian.

The Wangs, Xuanwu district residents, explained to Hall that their brother was mute. "They were very happy because the man was missing 10 days and they'd been looking all over Beijing for him," said Hall.

They had reported the disappearance to Baizhifang police station close to their home. "They said he would have died if he was not in the hospital that night," said Hall.

Hall told *Beijing Today* he will visit the Wangs.

"This is something I would do anywhere in the world," he said.

"It's in your nature to help people in trouble. If you walk past with your eyes closed, one day when you are in trouble, nobody will help you."

"Now everybody knows the story and they say to me. 'Yes, this is very kind thing you did, but it is also dangerous because you would be in big trouble if the man died.'"

"For me, I don't think about this. It's not a problem. In the end, the truth will prevail."

In emergency situations, authorities advise those who can't speak Chinese to dial 110 for help. If the operator can't answer in English, hold as the call is transferred.

Foreign language services are available. Also you can dial 119 for fire, 122 for traffic accidents and 120 for medical emergency.

Pupils Gain Comfy Chair

By Feng Yihua

Chinese students always stand listening to their teacher giving instructions. However, 12,000 students in Dongcheng District have obtained the right to be seated before their teachers.

Dongcheng District on March 14 carried out "focus on dignity and character, implement an education of respect" education project in which children and teenagers can be seated to talk with their teachers.

Beijing Shiyi Middle School was the first to place chairs for students in the office. The seats are just like those in the train. Teachers and students can sit as mutual friends to talk. But it is the first time Dong Cheng demands all 114 middle schools, primary schools and kindergartens achieve this goal.

"Students and teachers are equal. They should respect and love each other," said Zhang Yan, a student from No.55 Middle School. "I don't like the previous style. My teacher sat on a chair and kept talking, while I stood straight to listen. It was just a punishment. I think it is better to talk with a teacher on an equal footing."

The principal Liu Nan of Shi Zipo Kindergarten told *Beijing Today* that they required all teachers squat down to talk with the children.

Good manners were another requirement for the teachers.

"The regulation of that project is out-of-date as we have been doing it for a long time, and we even laid down better operating rules," said Liu.

Dad Seeks Rights to Baby

Woman aborts child without warning husband

Laws and regulations:

According to the 47th item of the Law of Women's Rights and Interests, women not only have the right to bear but also have the freedom to decline to bear.

According to the laws of population and family planning, a kind of new law to be enacted on September 1 this year, a citizen has both the right to bear a child and the responsibility to comply with family planning. Family planning, a distinct policy in China, means one family shouldn't have more than one baby.

By Sun Ming

After his wife had an abortion without alerting him, a Beijing man filed for divorce last week. But in filing suit at People's Court of Fangshan District, the husband argued she had infringed upon his rights to have a child.

Li Yong, 36, said he had previously held great affection for his wife. "We became acquainted with each other through a personal advertisement in 2000 and married in January last year."

But a problem arose when Zhang Li, 29, became pregnant unexpectedly in November last year. "I'm already 35 years old," Li says he told his wife. "I can't wait any longer."

Without informing her husband, Zhang instead had an abortion in hospital on December 28. Li disagreed with his wife's lack of consultation, her decision and her final action.

He said his wife's action not only injured his affection, but also infringed upon his rights to have a child. He sued for divorce on March 12.

Under persuasion by parents of both sides, however, the couple dropped the case two days before the court session on Wednesday. But the case has touched off a debate in wider society. The sticking point is a father's rights to childbirth. Opinions follow:

Sun Yi, male, lawyer, Beijing Jingdu Law Office

I resolutely oppose the wife's way of solving problems. She has infringed upon her husband's rights. A husband and wife should consult each other to decide whether to continue her pregnancy or terminate it by performing an abortion.

Though there is no clear regulation on the right to bear a child among current laws in our country, the embodiment of the right to bear a child in legislation dates from the Marriage Law issued in the 1980s.

According to the law, both husband and wife have the obligation to abide by family planning policy. Rights and obligations are corresponding, so we can deduce that both husband and wife have rights over the unborn child.

On the other hand, although women have the freedom not to bear babies, this kind of freedom shouldn't be as limitless as other freedoms endowed by law. The wife shouldn't force her husband to enjoy the freedom of not bearing because the husband also has rights to the child.

Wei Hua, female, Beijing Fengye Psychological Counseling Center, consultant

Many men think that they own the rights to bearing a child, but my opinion is that women should hold the dominant place on this issue. I think that while men get rights to bear the child, they do not have to fulfill the obligation. But at the same time as having the right to bear a child, women face the most responsibility to care for the children — such as pregnancy, birth, nurturing, nursing and education. Later, their entire life will almost be their child.

In this case what the wife has done is not inappropriate. After all, she has

discussed the idea of abortion with her husband, but he refused. So she alone could decide to do it.

Yang Zihui, male, researcher, Population Institution, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

According to the Law of Women's Rights and Interests, women have the freedom not to bear, but it doesn't mean that men haven't the right. The law just stresses the rights of women.

You know, in old times, women had lower status than men, who entirely owned the rights to childbirth. In most people's eyes, a woman was just a tool to continue her husband's family line.

If the pregnancy was not an accident but the result of the husband's deception, the wife certainly could have an abortion without telling her husband.

I heard that a man in Sichuan Province replaced his wife's contraceptives with vitamin pills, even though the couple had reached an agreement not to have a baby.

But in this case, the wife became pregnant by accident. And she had never told her husband that she didn't want a baby before. So the wife's action was out of order.

Zai Guirong, female, director of the obstetric department, Beijing Gynecology and Maternity Hospital

Generally speaking, a pregnant woman does not need to ask her husband or any of other family members to sign the operation agreement when having an abortion. Of course there are exceptions — if the operation is too risky.

But as an obstetrician, I detest having to do abortions. Anyway, to some extent, it's killing of little lives. As for this lady, what made me feel it unacceptable is that she didn't even give any advance notice to her husband before the operation. You know, a baby belongs to both the wife and the husband.

Wang Yuan, female, judge, Beijing Fangshan District Court

Infringing the rights to childbearing is not a reason for divorce. The unique standard by which we settle a divorce lawsuit is whether the affection between the couple has entirely broken down.

But this kind of action usually leads to estrangement between husband and wife. In this case, the husband withdrew the lawsuit before the court session. It's really a satisfactory ending.

Beijing resident American, female, requested anonymity

This is a complicated case in which both the rights of the husband and wife are violated. Does the husband have the right to force his wife to have a baby even if she does not want to? Would that in fact not return to the situation before New China?

The wife was unwilling to have this baby, but the husband says she has violated his right to the child through having an abortion. It seems he has violated her rights by ignoring her desire to wait. After all, he can still father a child, regardless of his age.



City people line up to express their last respects to Sun Weigang at Babaoshan public cemetery on January 24
Photo by Wang Zhenlong

To Sir with Love

Reports on teacher's death provoke students to defend his honor

By Chen Ying

Nearly 4,000 Beijingers came to pay their respects to a high school math teacher at a mourning ceremony in Babaoshan public cemetery on January 24.

On Monday's front page, *Beijing Youth Daily* published readers' letters. More than 80 readers called the paper's hotline that day. Letters keep coming.

Sun Weigang, a math teacher of Beijing No. 22 High School, died on January 20 of rectal cancer. He was 63 years old.

After his obituary was published on January 21, newspaper articles focused on one fact: 55 percent of Sun's students who graduated in 1997 went to Peking or Tsinghua University. Some media dubbed him as an "educator for examinations".

The title outraged some of Sun's former students. Sun Zhixing, Sun's class of 1999, published a piece in *Beijing Youth Daily* on February 5, saying people misunderstood her teacher. She wholeheartedly rejected the "educator for examinations" label.

Stung by the popular fury, *Beijing Youth Daily's* editors decided to reexamine the story. They sent reporters out to talk to Sun's relatives, colleagues and students about his 40-year career. An article about the "real Sun" appeared on March 10.

Sun was reported to have employed his own personal methods to teach students not only how to improve their intelligence, but also to cultivate their character. He won nearly 20 municipal and national awards for this exploration.

The debate widens. Readers now write in questioning the purpose and ultimate goals of education. The debate splinters over the choice of an exam factory or a school for life.

Sun Zhixing, student of Sun Weigang

Most papers adopted "the 55 percent of students of the whole class went to Peking University and Tsinghua University" as the main point in their articles about Sun. They know little about Teacher Sun. In fact, it was never the most important thing in his mind. What he really wanted to do was to cultivate us as persons of virtue.

Many consider Teacher Sun as the symbol of "education for examination". But I will dedicate my whole life to proving he isn't.

Principal of primary school, requested anonymity

People usually think of selecting an elite as the essential character of education and regard the score as the only selection standard for many years. So the situation of young people, as the main body of education, has gradually been ignored. Nobody cares

whether they know how to learn as long as they have learned something. People prefer the score itself to the process of how the score comes into being.

Frankly, I think few teachers can be like Sun. He devoted his heart and soul to his teaching career. I respect him just because he spent his life trying to resolve the relationship between education for examination and education for life values. That's also why I think he is a unique example.

What most schools and teachers do is just deal with the score as matriculation is still the only way to acquire success for most students. "Education for character" is still a luxury. Certainly teachers are bound to say they didn't teach students just to prepare for examination.

It's impossible to synchronize the relationship between the two just through teachers' efforts. Only if the education system, management and even the values of society change, will it be really possible to prize "character education".

Jiang Xianming, retired principal, Beijing No.22 High School

I think Sun Weigang was successful in his teaching exploration. He harmonized the relationship between examination and quality of character instead of making them oppose each other. He avoided the contradictions and embarrassments caused by the double standards in the education system.

Gong Yifang, Beijing Youth Daily reader

I believe every Chinese parent cannot forget the anxiety of waiting for his or her child to take matriculation.

Studying hard for examinations as an education model has exerted great pressure on parents and puzzles students. That's why all groups advocate reform.

I'm not a teacher and haven't conducted any research into education. But I'm touched and in shock after reading the articles about Teacher Sun's deeds.

I conclude the key to strengthening young people's character rests with the teacher — a teacher like Sun, who cherishes the students more than his own life. It's really lucky those parents met such a teacher who cares more for their own children than they do themselves.



Sun Weigang

Photo by Zhuang Jian

Final Score

Sun nursed three groups of students from first grade at junior high school through to third grade at senior high school.

The university examination scores of the first group — except one — all reached the minimum score for college.

Peking University and Tsinghua University admitted 15 of 40 students from the second group.

For the third group, 22 out of 40 students went to Peking or Tsinghua.

Entering Sun's class, they were not exceptional students.

For instance, 26 had not attained the minimum requirement for the best district junior high schools. Sun regarded moral education as the key to intellectual education.

He published a book, "My Three-Stage Education and Teaching Experiment (1980.9-1997.8)" [我的三轮教育教学实验(1980.9-1997.8)]. There are today no more than 1,000 books left of the first print run of 12,000.

SOUND BITES

"I cannot accept the honorary title of 'Debts Prime Minister'. Please take it back. Actually I have great pride in myself for being able to help the country overcome the impacts of the Asian financial crisis by adopting proactive policy. Moreover, we have managed to seek the opportunity to bring

about unprecedented economic development for the whole country."
— Zhu Rongji, China's premier, responds to Hong Kong media, at the closing press conference of the National People's Congress in Beijing

"I think the large part of the employees' opposition is the fact that they know the merger will cause the

layoffs of 15,000 people, so obviously the employees don't want to increase the chances of that slimming down."
— Roy Papp, partner of L. Roy Papp & Associates, talking about Hewlett-Packard Chief Executive Carly Fiorina's \$20 billion plan to buy Compaq Computer Corp.

"This area and that of the

western Arctic off Alaska are the two most rapidly warming places on the globe. The trends of melting ice shelves is now clear."

— Steve Sawyer, climate change scientist, after an area of ice the size of Wales thought to weigh almost 500 million billion tones had broken off the Antarctic continent

By Chen Ying

Cinema & Film Industries Set for Shake up

By Su Wei

In the past two years, the number of cinema tickets sold in China has fallen to 600 million per year.

Does going to the cinema still hold an attraction? How will entry to the WTO affect the Chinese film industry?

China Economics Monitoring & Analysis Center has surveyed over 700 people in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou about these issues.

Cinema patronage falling

Nearly 17% of the people surveyed said they did not go to the cinema at all last year.

51% went to the cinema less than five times last year, followed by 23% who went six to ten times. Less than 10% went to the cinemas more than ten times.

The numbers reflect the sorry state of the film market in China. Total box office sales in China were 0.8 billion in 1999 and 0.96 billion yuan in 2000. In America in 1998, the cinema box office was worth 6.86 billion dollars.

Chinese people once crowded into open squares to see films, even bringing their own stools. Now it seems that few are interested in going out to watch films, even in air-conditioned cinemas fitted out with soft leather chairs.

Besides televisions, more families have video, VCD or DVD players and even hi-fi stereo systems.

People can sit on their own sofas to watch movies of their own choice.

In the 1980s, tickets cost only 0.3 yuan. But today, prices have jumped almost 20-fold, and even more for foreign films.

There are a great many more titles available on VCD and

DVD than movies showing at cinemas, and they are usually available within weeks of the movie's international release.

"I can see any film I like whenever I like," says Zhang Hua, a frequent VCD buyer.

Another factor may be that many of the films screened in cinemas have similar stories and themes; love stories, war stories, detective stories or modern morality tales. "I can easily tell how they will end. The young lovers die or the good guy defeats the bad but loses his best friend..."

More to cinema-going than seeing movies

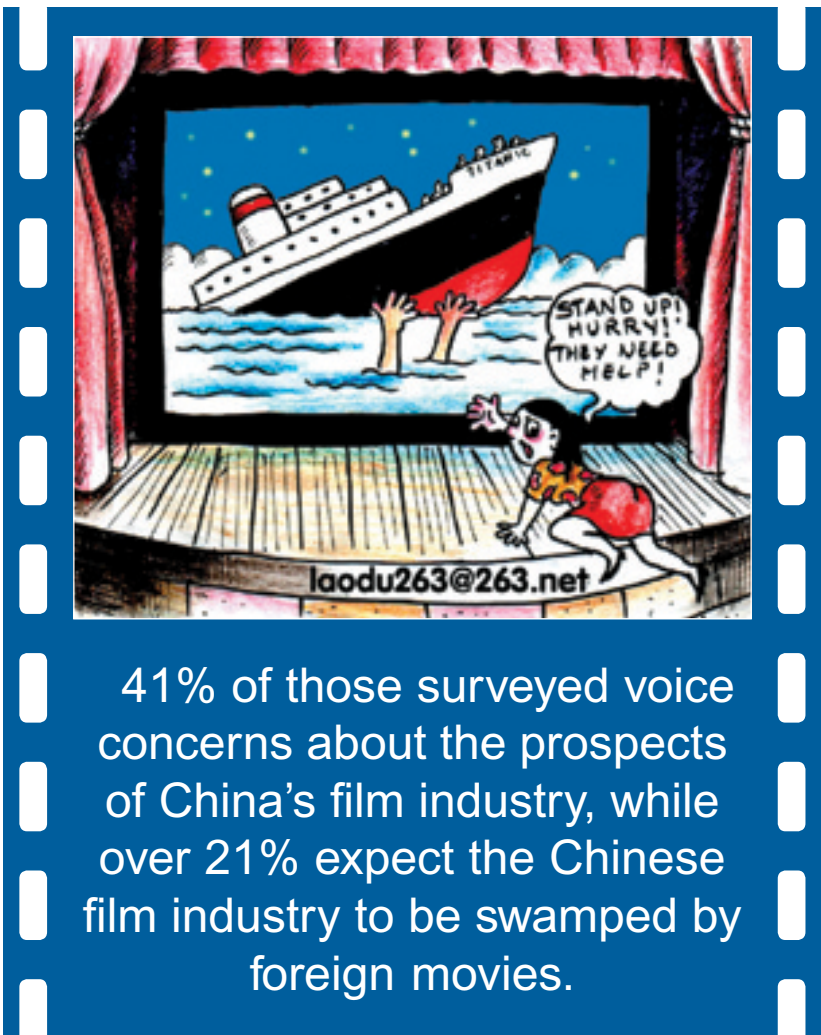
Among the 80% surveyed who went to cinemas last year, 40% say they did so because cinemas have much better audio-visual effects, followed by 24% who consider cinemas are better for getting together and 6% who had nothing better to do.

However, only 23% say they went to cinema only because the film was said to be worth seeing.

This suggests that cinemas still have a perceived advantage in terms of audio-visual effects, despite many families possessing high-quality stereos.

It also suggests that traditional opinions towards seeing films at cinemas have changed.

People may think it is much more meaningful than just eating or chatting at home, especially young people. "It is very romantic to have friends meeting at the cinemas, making small-talk accompanied by interesting



stories and beautiful music."

Furthermore, going to the cinema in a group can be more economical. It may cost around 100 yuan for several people to see a domestic film, possibly cheaper than everyone eating well at a restaurant.

But the variety of reasons for people going to cinemas reveals few people really care about film as an art.

Film critic, Shao Mujun points out the biggest problems facing Chinese film is that the ordinary public treat films primarily as a social event, while management staff consider films as propaganda tools and producers look at films as art.

"The longer the differences remain, the harder it will be for films to become a part of people's life."

Foreign investment in cinemas brings uncertainty

Nearly 82% of the surveyed say they expect to go to the cinema more frequently when foreign cinemas enter the Chinese market or more foreign films are introduced.

41% of those surveyed voice concerns about the prospects of China's film industry, while over 21% expect the Chinese film industry to be swamped by foreign movies.

The numbers suggest that imported films will attract the lion's share of viewers.

One reason is that more advanced technology has been adopted in many foreign productions.

"Foreign films not only have good performances, but great music and costumes too," says Wu Yue, an employee in a trading company.

But it also suggests that after entry to the WTO, people believe the domestic film industry will be severely tested.

Although people may have the opportunity to see the best selling foreign films, they are concerned with the consequences brought by foreign funds in building or renovating the local cinemas.

Film has always been regarded as an important propaganda tool in China. So with the allowing of up to 49% foreign funding in the film industry, some people are afraid the way of thinking may be changed and a more western ideology will be accepted by the younger generation.

As educator Ji Hua puts it, "The Chinese culture would lose its root in people's minds."

However, not everyone is so pessimistic about the future of Chinese film. It is recognized that imported films usually have an investment of 10 million dollars in America, compared with 0.2 or 0.3 million in China.

With lower investment, even though actors or directors are as capable as their foreign counterparts, ticket sales will remain relatively low.

Film director Huang Shuqing says the traditional cinema operation mainly depends on the box office sales for profits, but now over two-third of those are from the imported films.

"After paying the foreign companies for showing these films, cinemas almost have no profit." She also points out that Chinese directors are confined to producing films and have little influence in film promotion.

Anyway she admits that the development of film industry in Hong Kong in the 1970s and in Japan and South Korea in the latter part of the 1990s was accompanied by the simultaneous introduction of American films.

She suggests that with the introduction of more foreign films, the Chinese film industry will make progress and close the gap.

Furthermore, it is generally agreed that cinemas, film producers and publishing companies have long been separated from each other and concentrate on struggling to make their own profits.

Now the government is encouraging cinemas to be run by publishing houses. So the film industry, though still not commercialized, will be industrialized.

北京青年报
BEIJING TODAY
今日北京

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Sunwoods stereo products have been removed from the store shelves in the store since March 15
Photo by Qu Liyan

CCTV revealed the real Sunwoods' plant in Dongguan, Guangdong province



Sour Note Sounds for Sunwoods Speakers

Popular hi-fi brand name exposed as fake

By Ivy Zhang

Popular stereo speaker manufacturer Sunwoods was exposed as a "fake brand" in a high-profile CCTV program last Friday, Chinese Consumer Day.

Sunwoods speakers are marketed as a "royal-warranted Danish brand with a history of 70 years," imported from the "ASRC acoustics research institute in Copenhagen, Denmark".

The Sunwoods trademark, which is registered in both Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland, is owned by Denmark Sunwoods International Music Corporation. Since 1994, it has established over 100 franchise stores in 16 provinces. The Beijing branch opened in May last year.

Until last week, Sunwoods speakers were prominently displayed in 17 department stores in Beijing, with prices ranging from three to ten thousand yuan per set. Prior to CCTV's bombshell, they were one of the more popular brands on the market. A nationwide investigation into the company is underway, according to the China State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC).

Sunwoods is fake

The story went to air on CCTV Channel one at the prime time of 8 p.m. A figure with a pixelated face said "a few of us sat down in a room and cooked up the story of Sunwoods."

In a store selling stereo systems, when the Sunwoods trademark was removed, another trademark was exposed. The speaker had been assembled at a factory using parts and components of other unknown brands.

Using an address provided by the distributor, the CCTV reporter came to a warehouse located in a village called Lucun in Dongguan city, Guangdong province.

An employee eating a meal by the roadside confirmed that the so-called Denmark Sunwoods stereo speakers were delivered from that warehouse. He said they sold quite well, with some 100 speakers taken from the warehouse just recently.

Posing as a potential customer, the reporter then interviewed General Manager of Denmark Sunwoods Stereo Corporation in China Liu Yansheng. Zhang answered his questions calmly and eloquently.

"You don't know much about the import and export business. Many brand name clothes are produced in China and then loaded onto a ship. After setting out to sea, the ship then returns and the "imported" goods are unloaded. That is the method Sunwoods follows in some senses."

In Sunwoods chain stores, various certificates in both English and Chinese are displayed prominently on the walls, attesting to the brands



Flashy but "fake" webpages on Sunwoods' website. They are all gone now.

authenticity. The legal address of Sunwoods Corporation is stated as Bredgade 41; Box 1183.1011 Copenhagen Denmark. With the help of the Danish Embassy in China, it was found that although there is such an address in Copenhagen, none of the companies registered there are involved in manufacturing or exporting stereo systems.

Clean-up operation

Industrial and commercial sectors in China launched a unified clean-up operation on March 15, according to *Beijing Youth Daily*. All Sunwoods' sales outlets in Beijing had been sealed up before the CCTV program went to air.

The following day, when *Beijing Youth Daily* reporter went to the Sunwoods Beijing Office, at Liuliqiao near Beijing West Railway Station, nobody was there and there was no Sunwoods sign on the door.

In some shopping malls like Xidan Shopping Center and Landao, where the company's speakers used to be sold, all Sunwoods products were already removed from the shelves. Only a few brochures and brand marks were left behind.

Some curious customers asked sales assistants about Sunwoods' disappearance, only to be told "we don't know" or "the goods are being relocated."

Who is the victim?

In one store at Dazhong shopping mall specializing in electrical devices, the head of the hi-fi department, who requested anonymity, told

Beijing Today that more than 10 customers who had purchased Sunwoods speakers had come to the store by Wednesday. He said they had started selling Sunwoods speakers in August 2000. The product range included five speakers and one sub-woofer, priced at 3,000, 5,000, 8,000 and 10,000 yuan.

"The news came as a big surprise to everybody. Some customers told me that Sunwoods' had fooled them completely. They never had any doubts about the products."

Asked whether they had received any complaints about the quality of Sunwoods, he said, "No. People think the quality is OK. They buy Sunwoods for two reasons, the quality and the brand."

The customers are no doubt the victims in this case. Facing this case, their reactions seem to be quite somber. "No customer whined at us when they came around," said the man.

But the stores or distributors have much concerns and worries. "We are not in the sales season now and it's hard to say how much the influence of this case is," he said, "but it is sure to affect the Chinese stereo market in the long run."

"To be honest, we feel upset about this matter," another store chief said on condition of anonymity. "They came to Beijing to do business and can produce a complete set of official papers. The store buys in thousands of brands. How can we check and review each of them?"

In a franchised exclusive store, an impressive set of papers and certificates are available for inspection, including custom clearance forms, quality inspection forms, import and export inspection forms, business license, agent authorization, as well as Dolby and DTS certificates.

Even some media was fooled. In addition to flashy news coverage about Sunwoods' "Danish traditional and consistent design and delicate state-of-the-art craftsmanship," one of the largest Beijing local newspapers published an article full of praise for Sunwoods on the same day the fraud was disclosed on TV. It was titled "Sunwoods stepped out of the royal family." And it stepped into trouble.

Compensation a knotty problem

Can consumers receive a double refund, as specified in the China Consumer Protection law? What steps are open to them now?

Beijing Today asked Dong Jingsheng, Vice-President of China Consumers Association and Xia Jingying from the Consumer Committee of China Quality Association.

According to Article 49 of the China Consumer Protection law, the consumer is entitled to get a double refund from the store the goods were purchased from if the fraud is confirmed. But this case is rather complicated.

"The SAIC is investigating this case. How it is solved depends on the nature of the case set by SAIC and the applicable laws," Dong said.

Generally, the consumers could go to the store to claim for refund or compensation. If it's not the store's responsibility, the store can sue the manufacturers.

"But the problem is that the people who are liable may be not available in this case. The manufacturer might have gone bankrupt and the owners of the franchised stores are gone," said Xia, "The owners of the local shopping centers were also cheated and are victims themselves. As to who's going to compensate the clients for the loss, it is hard to be absolutely fair."

Latest Developments in Shenzhen

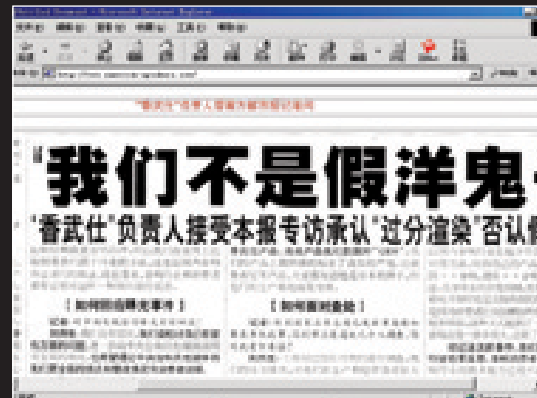
After the Sunwoods story was exposed on CCTV, almost all Sunwoods products in Shenzhen disappeared from store shelves.

A spokesperson from Shenzhen Administration for Industry and Commerce said they began investigating the Sunwoods case in early February after receiving a tip off from an informant and CCTV reporters.

The result of their initial investigation was publicized on Monday. Sunwoods was found to have issued fake publicity and misled consumers, violating Article 24 of China's "Unfair Competition Law". As yet, the Shenzhen Administration for Industry and Commerce (SZAI) has not taken any action.

Liu Yansheng, President of Zhongyang Corporation, the manufacturer of Sunwoods stereo products, said the removal of Sunwoods products was intended to make the administration's work easier. Meanwhile Sunwoods has submitted a request for an administrative review.

(March 19 news report by Southern Metropolitan News)



"We are not fake foreign devils" - Only two news stories can be found on Sunwoods' website now

Interview with Liu Yansheng, President of Zhongyang Corporation, the manufacturer of Sunwoods stereo products

Are Sunwoods products fake and inferior products?

No. Sunwoods is our own brand and registered in Denmark, Europe and China. The manufacturer and production base indicated on the products are authentic. Furthermore, our products have passed examination by national authorities.

Does Sunwoods cheat consumers by using an international brand name?

You can't say our goods are camouflaged under an international name. Our concept comes from Denmark. When promoting our products, we just over emphasized the international brand name.

What's your response to the CCTV report?

We will respond to them. We'll review our problems in terms of publicity. I hope CCTV and other media will take a broader view of our business as well as improvements we make. Sunwoods follows an OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) business mode. Which law have we violated?

What do you mean when you say you use the OEM mode?

Our plant in Dongguan, Guangdong province is where we produce the medium and low end speakers and subwoofers. For the high-end products, we use "OEM" overseas.

What do you think about the SZAI's investigation?

We have shouldered much pressure from the investigation. But we believe the SZAI will handle the case legally. And we'll have the right to state our views and defend ourselves.

Why do you emphasize Denmark in your publicity?

Our stereo standards and concepts are always kept in line with overseas products. Thus many domestic enterprises promote their products as American, German or Denmark stereos. We need to rethink, and our industry needs to rethink in light of this case. China's stereo technology has reached world standard.

Are you going to delete "Denmark" from your brand?

We'll address this issue according to the law. But the quality of our products is sure to remain.

(Taken from Southern Metropolitan News on March 19.)



Sunwoods' trademark

Life Begins

at Fifty-eight

By Miao Yajie

An engineer-turned investment negotiator said good-bye to a steady and comfortable life and had enough audacity to meet the challenges of starting his own business at the age of 58, a move that took his colleagues and family by surprise.

Turning point in 1980

Twenty-two years ago, when China had just started opening up to the outside world, the country was in desperate need of advanced technology. At that time, Sheng Zhaohong had been working as an engineer at a radio factory owned by Tianjin Radio and Television Industrial Company for ten years. One day in April 1980, he learned that his superiors had decided to transfer him to the parent company's foreign trade section. Like many other university graduates who had been through the Cultural Revolution, working in a factory gave Sheng a sense of security, and he declined the transfer. The factory manager came to discuss the issue with him, but Sheng again refused. A short time later, he was summoned for a third time, at which point he realized that he didn't have a choice. He reluctantly agreed to go, but requested that his boss first, "please explain what 'foreign trade' is".

The move proved to be a turning point in Sheng Zhaohong's career. The first project he was involved in was introducing an assembly line for a black-and-white television picture tube. Two years later, he was one of the main negotiators on a deal with Nippon Electric Glass, worth 160 million yuan. That year, Sheng, then 38, was being introduced as the youngest project chief in the company.

"I was young at that time, the only thing I cared about was that I learned something through negotiations," says Sheng. His business knowledge quickly accumulated, not only in terms of terminology, but also in accounting and articles of various laws and regulations.

In his fifteen years working in the area of foreign trade in Tianjin, he participated in projects as varied as the introduction of complete sets of electronic equipment, processing of materials supplied by clients, compensatory trade, contracting overseas construction projects, and securing overseas investment.

It was this rich experience in the field that, some years later as a negotiator for China Unicom, led him to insist on adding a clause to its standard contracts including 'changes of government policy' to the articles of non liability, thus saving China Unicom a fortune in compensation payouts, when the government policy did change finally. "Many of my former colleagues in China Unicom wondered how I could have had such foresight. They said it was a great idea to put the 'changes of government policy' in the contract," Sheng said with a proud smile. "Experience!"

A negotiator never takes pen and paper

In 1995, the light of destiny once again shone on Sheng. A former superior was named General Manager of the newly established China Unicom in Beijing, and she offered Sheng a job.

"I was fully aware that this was an opportunity for me, it meant a much bigger stage." He went back home and asked his wife whether he should go. She replied, "Do whatever you think is best for your career."

Sheng came to China Unicom on 15 August 1995. The most crucial issue then for the one-year-old telecom company was lack of money, or as Sheng puts it, "All the pots were boiling, yet no rice was ready for cooking." He kicked off his negotiating career as director of the Project Cooperation Department.

He had been in the job just five days when he faced his first big test. A team from Bell Canada International (BCI) arrived in Beijing to cement a deal China Unicom. The negotiations continued day and night at the Grand Hotel near Wangfujing. At 6:30 am on the 26 September, all details of the 120-million-yuan contract were finally settled. BCI became the first big company among several tens of enterprises to encounter Sheng's style and his gift for negotiation. BCI chief negotiator John Chen later became a good friend.

"I'm an attacking type," said Sheng, "and I never bring a paper and pen with me to the negotiating table."

Sheng stores everything in his own human "random access memory", which also captures without fail the most important focal points in the negotiation. Sheng attributes his talent and his style to the training he received at his alma mater, Tsinghua University. "Tsinghua has many good traditions, one is the atmosphere of competition. Everybody wants to be the top student. The second is its teaching method; students are taught to capture the focal points of a subject. The third is that they encour-

Sheng Zhaohong, resigned at the age of 55 as a department director of China Unicom, to start his own business. "I want to do something greater," he says.



Sheng enjoys leisure time at home
Photos by Zhuang Jian

age students to be innovative."

By now, Sheng Zhaohong was no longer the one asking for a definition of foreign trade. He himself was the definer: Negotiation means that both the buying and selling parties share a common understanding, the two sides want to reach an agreement. The final goal of a negotiation is to reach a contract that both parties are satisfied with and accept.

The chief negotiator should always bear in mind the bottom line of the specific negotiation. Everything else is a question of technique. "Negotiation techniques," says Sheng, "are different with different countries."

Once a Japanese negotiator and Sheng argued until three o'clock in the morning. The Japanese cried in front of him, saying that if he continued to cut the price, he would be fired on his return to Japan. Sheng was unmoved; he knew it was part of the game. Meanwhile American negotiators might try to intimidate their rivals by raising their voices. Sheng's response was simply to shout back at them.

Sheng's record for a marathon negotiation is 51 hours without closing his eyes for sleep. Four companies including Telecom Italia, Sumitomo Bank, Daewoo, Mitsui took turns to negotiate with him. After two days and two nights, while still in the middle of talks with Telecom Italia, the China Unicom General Manager called him to attend a banquet. During the three-hour banquet, his boss commented that Sheng did not seem to be as clear-minded as usual and asked him what was wrong, "Nothing, I just haven't slept for 48 hours; adding this three hours, it's 51 hours already," replied Sheng.

According to normal logic, anyone who works such ridiculous hours as Sheng, must be thinking about the financial benefits or promotion. Sheng denies both. "My salary was no more than other departmental directors, and I never received a bonus for working overtime." He says his motive comes from his credo that if something is worth doing, it's worth doing well.

Sheng was used to being in the eye of the storm, but his resignation on 16 August 1998 was still a shock to the whole company. His family, his friends and his colleagues all entreated him to think twice, but Sheng was firm with his decision, "I want to do something greater," he told them.

To do something great

Two weeks after leaving China Unicom, Sheng joined Henderson (China) Investment, as executive assistant to Chairman Li Jiajie. However in what was the winter for IT businesses, it was not easy to find good projects worthy of investment.

Sheng spent a lot of time at his two-story home in Changping county, thinking. Still full of energy, he felt like a caged beast. He spent his days pacing up and down, until his wife complained that she was not accustomed to seeing her husband like this. She knew the best medicine to cure a workaholic was to get him to do something.

The two-year contract with Henderson ended at the end of August last year, and Sheng left still with the hope of doing something greater. Two months later he established his very own company, Can Do Consulting. Familiar with the local laws and regulations, possessing a rich experience in dealing with foreign investors, a strong knowledge of the domestic market and a network of useful contacts, meant he was well qualified to act as a consultant. China's entry to the World Trade Organization provided the right timing, as more and more foreign investors would come to China, and more and more Chinese entrepreneurs would seek to invest abroad, "I can be a good bridge," says Sheng.

According to a friend, Li Yanan, who used to own an advertising agency, Sheng "is a terrific advisor on financial affairs and economic laws. All his suggestions are feasible and practical."

To start one's own business at the age of 58 might seem like folly for most people, but not for Sheng, "I still have ambition," he says. "I want to do several big projects."

"And how big?"

"Over 100 million US dollars."

Sheng's Career Highlights

- 1980 Transferred to foreign trade section of Tianjin Radio and Television Industrial Company
- 1986 Transferred to Tianjin Bureau of Foreign Economy & Trade Affairs
- 1995 Appointed director of Project Cooperation Department, China Unicom
- 1998 Resigns from China Unicom and takes up advisory position with Henderson (China) Investment
- 2001 Establishes Can Do Consulting

By Zhao Pu

The flow of antique paintings from overseas back to the Chinese mainland has become a key trend in the fine arts market in recent years. As the hammer rises for China Guardian 2002 Spring Auction (April 22, 23), a painting of a Song Emperor has whetted the appetites of many museums and private collectors.

Though Guardian Auction House and many connoisseurs hope that this precious artwork will stay at home, the painting is destined to fall into the hands of the highest bidder.

A rare and precious antique

Birds Sketch, a painting by Song Emperor Zhao Ji (1082-1135AD) is being sold by a private Japanese collector. It is the first work of art by this artist-emperor ever to be auctioned internationally.

The 900-year-old, 521.5-centimeter-long painting, mounted on a silk scroll comprises of 12 sections depicting birds and flowers. According to art specialists from Guardian Auctions who recently inspected the scroll, the brushwork is identical to other known paintings by the Song emperor, indication that the work is genuine. The imperial seals of Zhao Ji stamped on the painting, plus some 40 seals of subsequent collectors, are further evidence of its authenticity.

However Xu Bangda, an authority in the appraisal of old paintings, says that what is being offered for auction may only be one section of the original painting.

While most estimates date the work to the later years of the emperor's reign, Xu voice his judgment that Zhao Ji painted *Birds Sketch* at the age of 18 or 19. "The imperial stamp of 'One Person Under the Sky' does not appear on this painting, suggesting that it is a production of his early years," says Xu.

The Artist Emperor

Zhao Ji, or Emperor Song Huizong is esteemed as an outstanding artist rather than a good emperor. His reign of 25 years is characterized as a fatuous and tyrannical.

His chief claim to fame, as every middle school student knows, is the Jing Kang Incident (1126AD), in which he was captured by the Jin army, marking the end of the Northern Song Dynasty.

Ascending to the throne at the age of 18, Zhao Ji was already an accomplished poet, calligrapher and painter.



Photo by Le Qian

①

Emperor's Painting Illuminates Spring Auction



②



③

er. The calligraphic style Shoujin he created has long been appreciated as a peculiar branch of the Chinese calligraphy tree.

Due to his love of painting, the art school of the late Song Dynasty gathered numerous artists and prospered for a time. Sketches from nature make up a significant part of his oeuvre. Flower and bird sketches were taken as the evaluation criteria of an artist in the Song Dynasty, under the influence of the painter emperor.

A story in Chinese art books records his persistent pursuit of the nature sketches. A litchi tree in the courtyard of the imperial palace was bearing fruit, and a peacock lingered under the tree. The emperor summoned all the court painters to sketch the scene. When the painters submitted their paintings for his assessment, the emperor expressed disappointment. He noted that when the peacock flew into the air, it raised its left foot first; whereas the peacocks depicted by the artists raised their right foot.

Priceless Artwork to Remain in China?

Though Guardian Auction House has not revealed their estimate for this art treasure, many predict it to go for over 10 million yuan, and some anticipate the auction will set a new record in China.

Ji Kang's *Regimen*, a calligraphy work by another Song Emperor - Song Gaozong went for 9.9 million yuan two years ago; *Ten Odes*, a painting and calligraphy work by Song poet Zhang Xian set an auction record in China when Hanhai Auction Company sold it for 19.8 million yuan in 1995. Zhao Ji is regarded as a superior artist to both of them.

Many domestic museums are showing a great interest in the painting, as are some overseas collectors. Will the painting stay in China or become a prize exhibit somewhere else in the world? April 23 will bring the answer.

(Potential buyers can contact Guardian Auctions directly for an estimate. Tel: 65182315)

① A Guardian staff member carefully unrolls Zhao Ji's *Bird Sketch*

②+③ Details of Bird Sketch

Beijing Under Reconstruction



Main entrance of Deling Tomb

Photo by Xi Yuming

Ming Tombs to Receive 38 Million Yuan Face-lift

By Miao Yajie/Xi Yuming

Renovations, repairs and reconstructions are the order of the day as Beijing starts sprucing itself up in preparation for the 2008 Olympics. Besides the Forbidden City renovation project, a major reconstruction of the Ming Tombs started this month, and is due to be completed before the opening of the Beijing Olympic Games.

Deling Tomb is the first to undergo restoration work. Attention will turn to six other dilapidated tombs in the following seven years.

Deling Tomb is the burial place of Emperor Zhu Youxiao (1620-1627), the 15th emperor of the Ming Dynasty, and his empress Yi'an. The tomb area is in a poor state of repair, with the once magnificent Hall of Blessings collapsed and the Gate of

Blessings entirely gone. Only the green pines and cypresses still stand in testament to the solemn past. The renovation of the tomb is to be completed within two years.

Due to lack of funding, only Changling Tomb, Dingling Tomb and Zhaoqing Tomb among the 13 Ming Tombs have been renovated during the past half-century.

The total cost of the renovation project is estimated at 38 million yuan. One million yuan of this comes from a special fund allocated by the State Culture Relics Bureau, and the rest has been raised by the Ming Tombs Administrative Office, mainly from the sale of admission tickets for Dingling Tomb and Changling Tombs, Juyongguan Great Wall, and the Divine Road.

Green Olympic Project to Clean up Temple of Earth

By Miao Yajie

While the Deling Tomb project will be a boon for tourism, more Beijingers will benefit directly from the Temple of Earth renovation project. With a total investment of 490 million yuan, a new square with grass, trees, flower gardens, fountains and sculptures will be constructed around the popular park. The launch of the project also marks the beginning of the Green Olympic Project.

The Temple of Earth has long been hemmed in by temporary houses; while the poor environment and frequent traffic jams blight the historical appeal of the imperial garden. The project will also see the restoration of the original walls of the temple, while the road leading to the south gate will be widened from the current seven

to nine meters to thirty-two meters, to include a bike path and pedestrian way. Work is expected to be completed by the end of August.

Meanwhile, reconstruction of Yongdingmen gate tower, to the south of Qianmen, will begin in two months. Yongdingmen, built during the Ming Dynasty, was the biggest and most important of Beijing's seven outer city gates. Because the original site of the gate tower is just north of where a bridge now crosses the canal, the new tower will stand 30 meters north of the original site. The old Yongdingmen had an embrasure watchtower in the front, a gate tower at the back, and a barbican in the middle of the two buildings. The reconstruction, to be built according to the original design, is to be completed this year.

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Pretend to Be...

By Jimmy

Pretend to be a bird, I could fly;

Pretend to be fish, I could dive;

Pretend to be a dog, I could hunt rabbits;

Pretend to be a cat, I could act wildly;

Pretend to be an angel, I could be pure and holy;

Pretend to be a devil, I could be fierce and cruel;

Pretend to be a person, well, ... that could be boring.



Illustration for Pretend to Be...

Convince You of The Pure-hearted Things

By Zhao Pu

On Sanlian Bookstore's best-seller list, Taiwanese writer Jimmy (几米) occupies not one, but several prominent places. *A Chance of Sunshine* tops the list with the sales of more than 100 copies in the first week. Several of his other books are also best sellers.

Opening any of his 11 works, delicate watercolor paintings together with simple poetic words tell imaginative and inspiring stories. "Jimmy touches the softest part of people's hearts with the simplest language," says Zhang Zhijun, an editor at Sanlian Bookstore Publishing House, the publisher of Jimmy's books in Chinese mainland, "that's why he is so popular."

"Everyone in this society cares about two things," says Zhang. "One is how other people succeed, or made their pile; second is how I can succeed and become rich. We are all pursuing success and fame, but we are all ordinary people, and

we all need affection and love in life."

"At present, if you tell others that you have a pure love, they'll laugh at you. People no longer believe in true love," says Zhang, "but Jimmy can convince you with a simple watercolor painting that there is still such a thing as pure-hearted love, sincere trust and naive pleasure. He inspires you, encourages you and pushes you to carry on."

A Chance of Sunshine, his magnum opus, which propelled him to the forefront of Taiwanese publishing market, tells a story of the fate of uncertainty. The hero is a violinist and the heroine a translator. They live in two adjacent apartment buildings. He usually walks to the left, she goes to the right; they never met until one day, a sudden passion brings them together. They spend a sweet afternoon and are separated in uncertainty. A year later, when they are both leaving the lonely city, they find each other again.

Facing Terror With Peace

The materials have no meaning, the way fixing them together gives them sense.

By Shi Xinyu

An indoor installation art performance on the theme of the 9·11 terror attack has attracted hundreds of visitors since its opening last Saturday.

"It is my first piece of work, and although I expected it would be recognized, I never thought it would attract so many people," says Zhou Xiang, the 27-year-old creator of the work, titled "0·4D", on show at Beijing Shangri-la Commune.

A voice hardly heard

After the 9·11 terror attack happened, the majority of media reports were concerned with the resulting economic fallout, political turbu-

lence, and the negative influence on people's material lives.

Zhou took it as a pity, especially a pity for artists, that only a few people reviewed the tragedy from the angle of human nature with respect for the value of lives. "I decided to make such a voice for myself," Zhou says, "and 0·4D is my voice to wake up people to their own inner worlds."

The "0" symbolizes an invisible gate to an uncertain 4th dimension world, because "it is the meeting point of positive and negative numbers in mathematics and it could either be a beginning or an end," explains Zhou. "The result of the uncertainty is up to everyone's own choice. It is just like the choice between good and evil when one faces the inner self."

Making sense from meaningless materials

Using a variety of fibers, fabrics, plastics, metals, transparent soft pipes, crystals, xuan paper (a special paper traditionally used for calligraphy and painting) and water, Zhou presents her idea of using human beings' inherent immaculate and gracious spirit to fight against and overcome external violence and terror.

"The materials have no meaning by themselves. It's the way they fit together that gives them sense," says Zhou.

A piece of colorless plastic is set on the floor and raised at the four corners to form a pool-like base, in which lies a few inches of water. "The pool symbolizes human nature. It is transparent and not easily realized but it is always there. The water is the source of life, which can gestate both good and evil."

In the center of the pool stands a frame, made from the metal remains of an old bus, wrapped with white xuan paper. Zhou believes all metal things have a hardness and a kind of power that can not only build up a world but could easily destroy one also. "It is just like the

wisdom and ambition of human beings," she says. "We cannot give them up, but we should use goodness to lay siege to them and make them less dangerous to others."

High in the air, a shining piece of white transparent gauze flows from the vertex to the end of the frame, twinkling together with many colored and lustrous bits and pieces and scraps of iron things slung by thin fibers. "Actually conscience and evil are all glaring in our hearts. What I intend to express here is that our conscience is the only real guide and the hope that it should have the power to dim the allure of evil," Zhou says.

Surprising, clean and moving

Many visitors express surprise when they see 0·4D, and find the sense of peace and quiet very attractive.

Three-year-old French girl Lily asked her mother to take her back to the exhibition room again when they were on the way home after visiting once, insisting that it was the "nice and clean" place she had been to in her dreams.

Some Chinese artists say the fact that even a little girl could respond in this way to a piece of non-mainstream contemporary art should be attributed to the sincerity of its maker. "It moves, rather than stimulates people," says Wei Gang, a freelance pottery maker and sculptor, "so people accept it as a piece of art and not a farce."



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Exaggerated Absurdity Turns into Truth

By Xiao Xia

Millennium Teahouse, directed by Stan Lai (Lai Sheng-Chuan) is to be staged again in Beijing from March 25. The "most exciting theatre in the Chinese speaking world", according to the Far East Economic Review, has aroused wide discussion on Xiang-Sheng, or cross-talk, a traditional form of stand-up comedy since its premiere last winter.

Millennium Teahouse tells stories from the cross-talk stage set simultaneously on a night in the year 1900 and a night in 2000. In Lai's drama, cross-talk is the main form of performance. The play covers topics such as the past and future of the art, as well as subsidiary themes that have evolved since his first cross-talk series in 1985. He also extends his ideas on absurdity and truth in the play.

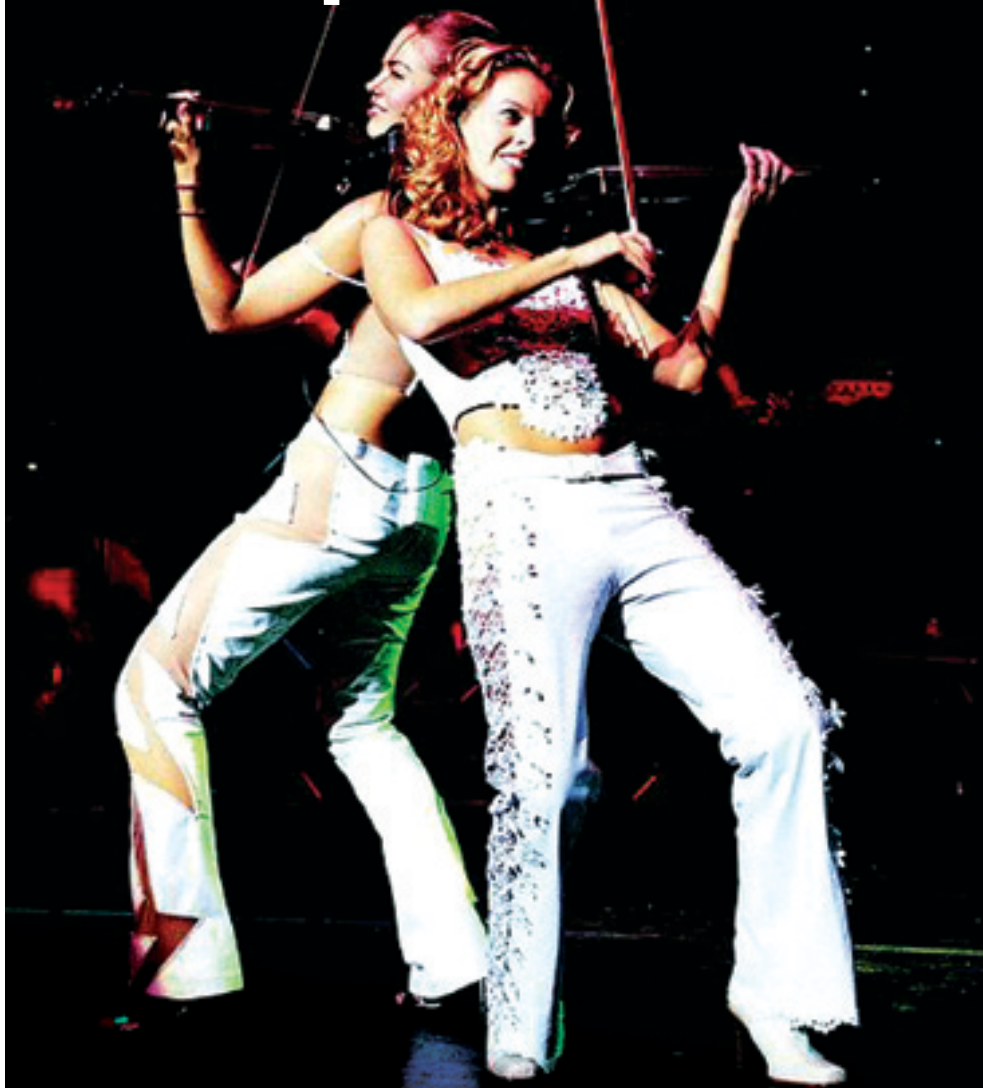
The "endology" is the chief absurdity stated in the drama. Endology, created by Stan Lai only for the Millennium Teahouse, is a study on the ending. Two performers manage to prove to themselves the principle of endology: the one at the end always wins, or the ending is the most important.

The endology is by no means an absurd premise, for the processes are also important. "When you find one absurd premise and take it to its logical extreme, you will find it turns into a truth," says Lai. The audience keeps laughing at the form of the language. Gradually, however, they notice that regardless of whether it is good or bad, the ending is still the ending. They firmly accept the absurdity as a truth in laughter, because "the truth results in an absurdity," says Lai.

In Lai's Millennium Teahouse, the exaggerated absurdity turns into truth.

Stan Lai
Photo by
Li Yan

'Dame Bond' Combines Vanessa-Mae and Spice Girls



By Zhu Lin

The Bond girls of James Bond fame now have a rival on the concert stage, a string quartet composed of four stylish young female musicians, named 'Bond'. Following the release of their top selling debut album Born and a sell-out concert at the Royal Albert Hall, Bond will perform in Beijing on April 5 at the Workers' Stadium.

Like violinist Vanessa-Mae, all four members, Haylie Ecker, Eos Chater, Tania Davis and Gay-Yee Westerhoff, have formal classical music training. But this neo-classical-pop foursome are more

about beat than Bach, and their image and attitude seem to owe more than a little to the Spice Girls.

Vanessa-Mae's mother used to say, "My daughter is taking the fast track to be hot, but I'm afraid she won't stay hot for long." But the fact is, musicians like Vanessa-Mae are pushed to follow the path of commercialism by the demands of the market. Born has already sold nearly one million copies. No wonder Dickon Stainer, head of Decca UK describes Bond as "a variety act, an entertainment act."

Grassland Music to Echo in Beijing

Qi Baoligao plays a Matouquin, a Mongolian stringed instrument decorated with a horse head-shaped top. Long tunes are traditional ballads about Mongolian history, folklore and love stories. A Mongolian Long Tunes and Matouquin Concert will be held at the Forbidden City Concert Hall on March 22 and 23.

Photo by Zhang Cheng



Rising Stars in Short Supply

By Zhu Lin

March and April is a busy time for the pop music world, with various pop awards following one after another. Next Friday's Ninth Chinese Pop Music Billboard Awards Concert should be a highlight on the calendar. However, such celebrations alone are not enough to bring about a revival of the stagnant Chinese pop music scene.

"There are so few new pop stars to emerge last year, or recently, that we're afraid the concert won't be as exciting as it could be," complained Jiang Yingjun of Beijing GHY Culture and Art Corporation, the sponsor of the concert.

It costs between seven hundred thousand and one million yuan to launch a new CD, but the record companies don't want to risk that sort of money. All the efforts to prepare and promote a new singer - training, recording, marketing, all need money. In addition, it can take six months for a new CD to be picked up, and it's impossible for the record company to recoup its investment in a short period of time. "The local record companies are all cutting costs," said Jin Xing from Pulay Music, "and the quality of the work is lower."

"So even if a singer releases a CD, it's hard for it to receive public attention," she said.

The rental fee of a recording studio is three to five thousand yuan per day, and usually one CD album takes a month to complete the recording. A backing band can cost a further forty or fifty thousand yuan.

Furthermore very few unknown singers have the opportunity to release their own CDs. Disc companies worry about getting production costs back, let alone making a profit. Often a singer's releasing a new CD just means providing pirates chances to make a fortune. "Last week I met such a man in Hangzhou," said Guo Feng, a well-known local pop singer. "He told me he had sold 3,000 copies of my CDs in three days."

The problem of piracy and the stagnant situation of the local pop music scene not only holds back the emergence of new singers, but also acts as a disincentive for the established ones from developing. A vicious circle develops where the CD buying public hear little that is new and innovative, their taste and choices becoming narrower, and so the demand for new and innovative music also decreases.

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Time to Golf

By Jiao Pei

It's getting warmer and warmer in Beijing, when some sports-minded people start to think of just one word: golf. Started in Scotland in the 19th century, and popularized by such stars as Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicholas, and Tiger Woods, the sport is now popular the world over, and the reason you can't see a doctor on Wednesday. In America alone, there are 20,000 golf courses. China has seen a growth of courses in the last few years to around one hundred, forty of which are in Beijing.

Established in November 2000, Came in China (Beijing), a shop specializing in the Japanese "Honma" golf equipment brand (Ben Jian in Chinese), attracts customers with its high quality. Famous throughout Asia, "Honma" golf clubs come in many price ranges, with sets ranging from three to two hundred thousand yuan. The clubs may be of wood, steel, fiberglass or titanium shafts as your choice. For high rollers, you can even get platinum or gold plated sets! Along with the quality that money buys, the service is commendable; all shafts can be exchanged within two years if there are any defects and they offer free repair labor for the life of the clubs. Clothes and golf shoes are also available.

Add: B05, -1F, Kerry Mall, 1 Guanghualu, Chaoyang District. **Open:** 10:30am-8pm. **Tel:** 85299448.

What's your favorite shop, stand, bar or restaurant? We will be very happy to share your experience with all our readers and don't forget, a mystery gift is waiting for you if we print your story. Please contact us at 65902524. Email: shopping@ynet.com.



Photo provided by Honma

Tibetan Make-up Before Bar Time

By Li Dan

"I would go out tonight, but I haven't got a stitch to wear." Morrissey never shopped at Ai'er Shop strategically located up the street from the Sanlitun bars, many foreign-



Photo by Zhuang Jian

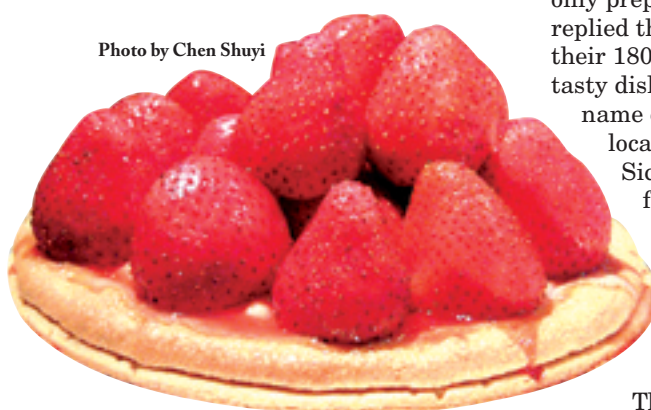
ers choose to visit this cute store before hitting the strip, attracted by the Tibetan fashions in the window. What little room is inside, shows a dazzling display of Tibetan jewelry and adornments, including earrings, necklaces, bracelets and handbags. Whether on the wall, floor, on the counter or hanging down from the ceiling, there is enough here to quickly turn you into a Tibetan prince or princess.

What's more, owner You Tao's paintings enjoy a certain popularity among foreigners in Beijing. His works are called modern Thangka (Tibetan painting focused on Buddhist subject) with a strong sense of color and symbolism.

Each week, the stock is flown to Beijing directly from Tibet. Since opening three years ago, many copycat shops around town have opened, but few compare. So the next time you go out, forget Gucci and Armani; find your stitch in this little Beijing corner of Tibet.

Add: Ai'er Shop (爱尔屋), 2# Building 37, Sanlitun Zhongjie (三里屯中街), Chaoyang District, bus 120 to Gongti Beilu, walk north 100 meters from the crossing then turn left. **Open:** 9am-9pm. **Tel:** 64175963.

Photo by Chen Shuyi



The Patisserie

By Lydia

Black Forest, Fruit Tart, Green Tea -- What do all of these have in common? No, they're not Beijing punk bands -- they're cakes.

The Patisserie is a delicacy cake shop with freshly baked cakes, pastries, breads, the finest chocolates and gourmet items. Austrian pastry chef Christoph Reinthaler's pastries can be seen everywhere in local upscale supermarkets and hotels, but there's only one Patisserie in the Grand Hyatt.

In The Patisserie we can see various cakes and chocolates with amazing and ever-changing designs. For example, Black Forest Cake really looks like a mystery forest with layers of thin chocolate pieces surrounding the cake with white chocolate cream on top. Fruit Tart consists of piles of strawberries and cake crust; it looks like a little red pyramid. Green Tea Cake is the most beautiful one of all, with alluring green tea powder splashed freely on the cream. All the cakes are displayed for only one day and then disposed of at night.

The Patisserie also has candles, baskets, gift boxes, and other baking/party accessories.

Add: The Patisserie (酥园饼屋), 1st floor of Grand Hyatt Beijing, 1 Dongchang'anjie, Beijing Oriental Plaza, bus 1, 4, 57 to Wangfujing.

Price: 150 yuan / pound.

Open: 8am-9pm.

Tel: 85181234 ext. 6362.

Best Bites

十八街面馆

The Secret of 18

By Li Dan

Shi Ba Jie Mian Guan - 18th Street Noodle Restaurant. Is it a name? Many customers ask, "Why do you call it 18th Street Noodle Restaurant? Is it the 18th one in Beijing?"

The restaurant made its grand opening at the beginning of this March. With the strange name, the traditional setting, a troupe of good looking waitresses and the fact that it is open everyday until 3am, Eighteen Noodles is getting a good buzz. "Don't worry! There are always people late at night, and we provide our best service till the last second of the day," says the owner.

Some of their offerings include; Ran Mian (Burning Noodles), Chuan Jiang Mian (Sichuan Sauce Noodles), Pai Gu Mian (Spareribs Noodles) and San Xian Mian (Noodles with Three Delicacies).

So why eighteen? "18 tables, 18 kinds of noodles with 18 different taste, 18 service girls all around 18 years old, opened on lunar January 18th, and the funniest reason is that everyday we only prepare 90 kilograms of noodles (or 180 jin)," replied the owner with a smile. And if they exceed their 180 jin limit? "Then we have also other tasty dishes and snacks." The real reason for the

name comes from a noodle restaurant that was located on No. 18 Street in Yibin City in Sichuan Province, 100 years ago. Yibin is famous for its bamboo, so each week the restaurant has tons of bamboo root water and seasonings flown into Beijing for their noodle soup. No wonder it tastes so great!

Add: Shi Ba Jie Mian Guan (十八街面馆), 26 Dongsanhuan Beilu (North East Third Ring Road), Baijiazhuang, Chaoyang District, bus 113 to Baijiazhuang, beside the road. **Price:** 12-18 yuan / a bowl of noodles. **Open:** 9am-3am. **Tel:** 65826550.

Photo by Zhuang Jian



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Business District Office Rent Up

By Wang Dandan

Twenty two foreign and domestic delegations have visited Beijing Central Business District (CBD) Office. The office has approved more than 100 companies in the area, giving rise to a new round of investment. Average office rent has jumped to more than US\$50 per square meter per month from US\$40.

There are 457 international companies, 570 foreign offices, 150 foreign banks and insurance companies and 192 law firms, accounting offices and consultancy offices in the CBD area. The coming of these companies has increased office rent in the area, with office occupancy over 96%.

Beijing CBD Office plans to start more construction in 2002,

providing chances to companies to bid for project planning. Delegations such as Singapore Industrial and Commercial Delegation, Italian St. Paul Delegation, American Investment Banking Delegation and International Environmental Protection Funds have all shown interest, according to a Beijing CBD press release.

Service Apartment Beats Hotel Room

By Wang Dandan

As the market expands, nearly all apartments in Beijing offer household service of different grades to stay competitive. Apartment complexes increasingly offer more services to meet demand. A service apartment offers all household service: no need to ask friends or advertise for an "ayi" housemaid. A service apartment avoids a stranger in the home looking after cleaning, washing, shopping and baby-sitting.

Where are these apartments?

Ascott, St. Regis, China World Hotel, Lee Garden and Oriental Plaza in the city center all offer five-star service. There are other projects which provide useful services but not five-star standard: no clubs, no facilities, only a housemaid.

Negotiable service

All service apartments provide household service upon request, but some include service charges in the rent while others don't. Also it's important to discuss how often to clean the apartment. Some customers prefer beds made every morning and apartments cleaned twice a week.

Differences with hotel room

Generally speaking, there is not much difference between a five-star apartment and a five-star hotel in terms of equipment and facilities. All these apartments are equipped with clubhouse, gym, swimming pool, sauna and broadband. But if staying more than a month, an apartment might save money.

Ascott, in the East Third Ring Road, offers a 78-square-meter room for about US\$3,000 a month. China World Hotel costs about US\$130 a day for a 40-50 square meter standard room, about US\$3,900 a month. A bedroom, a living room and a kitchen renders a five-star apartment more homely.

Price

The price of each project depends on the level of service required. Renting an apartment with all-round service costs about 30% more than a non-service apartment.



Apartments Evolve over 2002: Less Density, More Decoration

By Wang Dandan

High land use costs cram apartments close to each other in the Second and Third Ring Road. "No land will be left without apartments," is the popular saying in the real estate industry.

New styles alter

Apartment styles change with the market, with the main purchase trend moving towards middle-class families away from company bulk buyers. Apartments are thus becoming more economical.

With the construction of the Fourth Ring Road and an express traffic system between the city and the suburbs, apartments are starting to sprawl outwards.

Tianhu Group is building a 2,400,000-square-meter Changying residential area. Beijing Huarun Real Estate Development and Management Company has started construction in the south, north and eastern areas of the Fourth Ring Road. Beijing Shouchuang Group has developed 2 million square meters of villas in an area along Wenyue River.

All these projects are lower-density housing, such as villas and townhouses. The projects have smaller construction costs as they are

grander in scale than other projects in the city. They usually boast all-round facilities and amenities.

Mini apartments up

When the Beijing real estate market began in the 1980s, its chief beneficiaries consisted of company mass purchasers and the rich, with the result spacious and pricey apartments.

As demand increasingly influences supply, the bulk buyers disappeared and the rich rested on their laurels. Middle-class families are now the market. What they want are apartments that cost less than 500,000 yuan. As construction costs seem unlikely to decline anytime soon, buyers are seeking out smaller Hong-Kong-style apartments.

Projects have been seeing good sales in smaller apartments, while bigger apartments stand empty. Small apartments are selling out quickly, as demand continues to rise.

According to 2001 statistics, small apartments account for 15% of projects. Bigger apartments in middle-class projects, with an average price of 6,000 yuan per square meter, remain vacant while the smaller apartments are sold out before building is

even completed.

Apartments will increasingly lose space over 2002: with one-room apartments falling to 60 square meters; two-room apartments 80-90 square meters and three-room apartments of about 100 square meters.

Decor decisive

According to regulations starting December 1, 2001, developers who apply to construct projects should provide well-decorated, not plain rooms.

Plain rooms used to be dubbed "cars without wheels" in half-done projects. The well-decorated rooms save on costs by bulk fitting. It also prevents the structure from being damaged by apartment owners and reduces noise for the neighbors.

Domestic decoration is the future of the Beijing real estate industry. But a generic one-size-fits-all decor tramples on individuality. Updating decorations is another issue. Such issues need time to be resolved. Some developers already offer a menu of decoration choices to potential buyers.

Improving decorations will be the trend for 2002, with integrated kitchen appliances and bathroom facilities only the beginning.

Who Reveals Personal Information?

By Wang Dandan/Li Qingping

When buying an apartment, a customer gives the developer private information including work and phone number. Readers have told *Beijing Today* they receive calls from decorating companies even after rejecting a house and taking back the deposit. Upon investigation, it is learned the developer forwards the individual personal information to the companies.

Calls annoy purchaser

Lisa signed an agreement with a developer several months ago. But the developer did not deliver the apartment on time. As regulated by the agreement, Lisa rejected the apartment and obtained her deposit back.

But during negotiations with the developer to reject the apartment, she received calls from a decoration company, who recommended the apartment to her. As Lisa hadn't decided on a new apartment, she politely refused the request. The decoration company representative called Lisa every other day asking her to employ this company.

Lisa's puzzle

Lisa puzzled over how the decoration company had obtained her mobile phone number. Only her colleagues, close friends and relatives were given her number. She asked the staff from the company and was told the developer had betrayed her privacy.

Decorators pay for information

When the reporter contacted the company, the staff member

who had called Lisa admitted he obtained her number from the developer. He also said it is one very effective way of getting potential customer information as almost every buyer wants to decorate an apartment before moving in. It is clearly useful business for decoration companies to obtain the target client group information from a developer.

Salesman: potential profits

Zhang Jun, a salesman for a project told *Beijing Today* buyer info is a precious commodity for decoration companies. A salesman can obtain 2% commission on the done deal.

Judge: privacy violated

Revealing purchaser information is regarded as trespassing privacy, said Yan Ming, assistant judge of Beijing People's Second Intermediate Court.

Developer to compensate Lisa

The developer should compensate Lisa for what he has done. Compensation includes emotional damage and property loss. The developer should also immediately stop revealing other purchasers' privacy.

How to prevent such problems?

To avoid such problems, the buyer should sign additional rules in the contract that if the privacy is revealed by the developer, the developer should pay compensation. Such problems have occurred with more than one purchaser in Beijing. Then purchasers can take the evidence and authorize a lawyer to deal with the developer.



Pictures by Xie Feng

Lazybones: Take Note

By Wang Dandan/Han Kun

As the name suggests, a lying chair is for lying. It originated from jiao yi, a Ming Dynasty chair with folding legs.

Tang Yin (or Tang Bohu), a Ming Dynasty painter portrayed himself lying on such a lying chair. Mainly made of rosewood, some chairs are also made of rattan or bamboo. The chair is mostly used in the Suzhou and Guangzhou areas. Suzhou people prefer the smaller chairs, while Guangzhou people like them larger.

The back of the chair is flexible -- higher or lower -- to meet individual needs. The chair is often kept in the study or the garden.

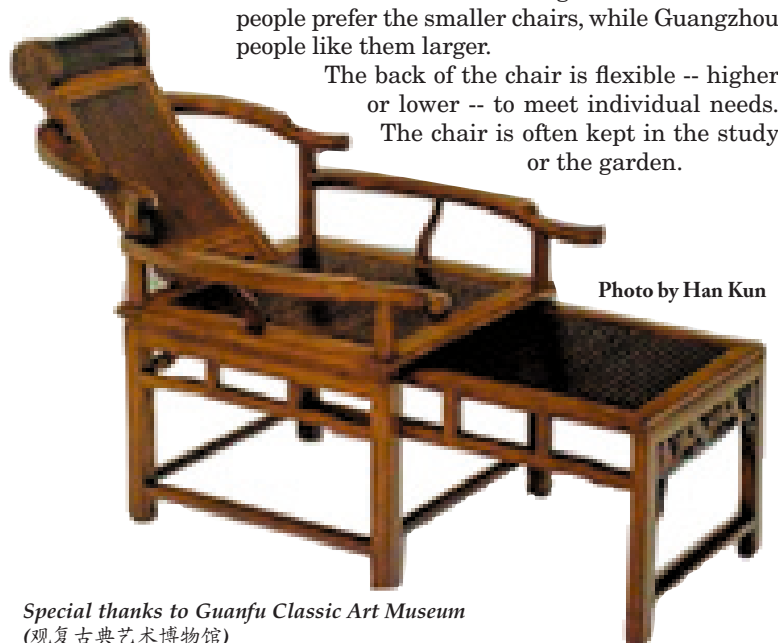


Photo by Han Kun

Special thanks to Guanfu Classic Art Museum (观复古典艺术博物馆)



Guest

Quiz

Target: New World Courtyard, Beijing
When: 5pm-6pm, Tuesday, Mar 18th
Hotel Detective: Li Dan

Mrs. Moua K. Gyllenhammar, Norway

The mattresses should be softer, and I suggest putting some milk as well as tea in the refrigerator. But I like this hotel for its high-quality service, and I enjoy going to shops in the neighborhood during the night.

Doront, France

It's very clean and they provide very good housekeeping, making things very com-

fortable. It would be better if we could see French programs in the room on TV.

Bengt Boyesen, Norway

I like the standard here. It is far better than we had expected. Although the hotel locates in this area of traffic jams, it is very clean and quiet. The reception ladies are very helpful and speak good English. Also, my 11-year-old son enjoys the Chinese food here so much!

"HOUSING" welcomes your feedback: What kind of difficulties do you encounter when looking for housing in Beijing? What kind of information do you need? What can we help you with? Our e-mail: housing@ynet.com Tel: 6590-2522 Fax: 6590-2525



To Let

Apartment for Sale

By Salinda

Description: two-storey apartment, 170 square meters, 6th floor, with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and 2 living rooms, a 20-square-meter sun room. Chinese decoration style, furniture, satellite TV, high-quality

electrical appliances.

Location: Haidian district, Shangdi Infor Industry Base, Xili district (3.5kms from Zhongguancun, 2kms from Tsinghua University)

Selling price: 1million yuan

Rent: \$2,500 per month

Contact: dushu@ynet.com

Exhibitions



Painting by Malcolm Koh

An Architect's Water & Ink Paintings

By Malcolm Koh, a famous Singapore architect, who has studied Chinese painting since the early 1960's. **Where:** Creation Gallery, near Ritan Park. **When:** March 23-29, 10am-7pm. Opening reception: March 23, 3-6pm. **Tel:** 65067570.

Ye Xue's Paintings

Works blend artifacts, especially terracotta warriors, with contemporary themes.

Where: Qin Gallery, 38A Fangcaodi Beijie, Chaoyang District. **When:** March 29 - April 11, 10am-6pm. **Tel:** 65074062 or 13601038025. **Email:** qingallery@yahoo.com



Painting by Ye Xue

Solo Art Exhibition

Originally from Shandong Province, Canadian artist Yong-Jin Cui graduated from the Shandong Provincial Academy of Fine Arts in 1987 before attending art school in Lausanne, Switzerland from which he graduated in 1993. He has presented his works in many galleries in Canada in recent years and is pleased to be back in China to give an exhibition including contemporary sculpture and photography. **Where:** Canadian Embassy. **When:** March 22-April 22. **Tel:** 65323536.

Hiking

The Country Lanes

Where: Mentougou County, west of Beijing.

Leave: 8:30am at the Lido outside Starbucks, 9am at capital Paradise's main gate. **Come back:** 4-5pm.

Cost: 150 yuan per adult, 100 yuan per child under 12. (round trip transport, snacks and beverages, professional guide).

Route: Hikers will walk through two villages. The first is called "Xia Hei Wo" (Lower Black Nest), the second is "Shang Hei Wo" (Upper Black Nest).

How to join: bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk and 13701003694 (Huilin).

Weather

Friday
March 22 Cloudy
Max: 17C. Min: 3C.

Saturday
March 23 Sunny
Clear
Max: 15C. Min: 4C.

Sunday
March 24 Partly Cloudy
Overcast
Max: 16C. Min: 5C.

Monday
March 25 Partly Cloudy
Clear to cloudy
Max: 15C. Min: 5C.

Tuesday
March 26 Sunny
Clear
Max: 16C. Min: 3C.

Wednesday
March 27 Partly Cloudy
Clear to cloudy
Max: 18C. Min: 4C.

Thursday
March 28 Sunny
Clear to cloudy
Max: 18C. Min: 3C.

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language exchange and accommodation info for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtodayinfo @ ynet.com or call 65902520.
By Priscilla / Lydia

Easter

Easter

A special Easter service with uplifting music, drama and an inspirational message relevant to your life today. Sunday School and childcare available. **Where:** 21st Century Theater, 2km east of the Kempinski Hotel. **When:** March 31, 9-11am. **Tel:** 1390 110 4943

Boat Trip for Celebrating Easter

From the Military Museum to the Summer Palace. The boat trip will be along the Third Ring Road to the South entrance of the Summer Palace, a gate few people visit. Snacks will be offered on board with plenty of beer and soft drinks. Late afternoon, people will go to a restaurant in the north of Beijing. It specializes in wild birds.

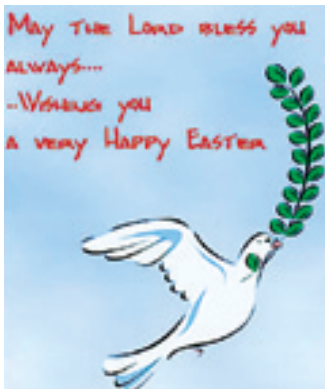
Leave: Worker's Stadium. **Fee:** 220 yuan per person (transport, entrance fee, food & drinks on board, dinner & drinks). **Email:** yphh@yahoo.com

Ladies Easter Brunch

The Women's Ministry of the Beijing International Christian Fellowship will host their next ladies brunch. It is an opportunity to meet new and old friends. Tickets are available in the BICF lobby. **Where:** St. Regis Hotel. **When:** 10:30am, March 30. **Admission:** 120 yuan per person or 200 for 2 persons Teachers/Students 60 yuan. **Email:** lathamk@public.bta.net.cn (Dolores Latham).

Easter Party

Garden sunshine, face painting, egg hunt-



ing, buffet and lucky draw. Two Easter bunnies will lead children in activities such as face painting and searching for Easter eggs. A buffet will also be available. **Where:** Silk Road Trattoria, the Great Wall Sheraton Hotel. **When:** March 31, 11am-3pm. **Fee:** 175 yuan per adult, 110 yuan per child, free for children under 3 years old, including free flow of soft drinks. **Tel:** 65905566 ext. 2117, 65905888.

Happy Easter

Easter buffet, Easter Sunday egg hunt in the spring garden. Clown, live bunnies, chicks and ducks, delicacies and games.

When: March 29-31. Easter buffet & egg hunt on March 31, 12pm. **Where:** Coffee Garden, Shangri-la Hotel Beijing. **Tel:** 68412211 ext. 2715.

Movies



Genghis Khan Mother - Chinese Movie with English Subtitles

Directed by Mailisi, Sai Fu, starring Tumen, Ailiya, 110 minutes, 1998. Set on the Mongolian plains, this film depicts the children and early years of one of history's pivotal characters. The director paid great attention to local costumes and dialogue to create a historically accurate portrait of the epoch when Mongolia's great hero came of age. The picture won the award for "Best Film" at the Philadelphia Film Festival in 1998.

Where: Cherry Lane Movies, Sino-Japanese Youth Exchange Center. **When:** March 22, 8pm. **Admission:** 50 yuan. **Tel:** 64615318.

Giulietta degli spiriti (Juliet of the Spirit)

Giulietta is a middle-aged woman who suspects her husband, Giorgio, of cheating after his initial neglect of her becomes habit. Frightened by the possibility of suffering a failed marriage, Giulietta receives mixed advice from friends, family and the spirit world.

Where: Cultural Office of Italian Embassy, 2 Sanlitun Dong'erjie. **When:** March 28, 7pm. **Admission:** free. **Tel:** 65322187.

French Movie - Fahrenheit 451

Directed by Francois Truffaut (1932-1984), 1960, in English. Adopted from Ray Bradbury's novel.

Where: Space for Imagination Coffee House, The Loft. **When:** March 23, 7pm (Coffee House), March 24, 3pm (The Loft). **Tel:** 62791280, 65065592, 65017501.

Swedish Film Week

March 21, 2:15pm, opening ceremony, *As White As in Snow* (Troell, 2000, 150 minutes). March 29, 6:30pm, *Autumn Sonata* (Bergman, 1978, 97 minutes), *Adult Behavior* (Herngren & Holm, 1999, 97 minutes). March 30, 1:15pm, *The Eye* (Hogert, 1998, 114 minutes), *Tsatsiki, Mum and The Phliceman* (Lemhagen, 1999, 91 minutes). 6:30pm, *Persona* (Bergman, 1966, 81 minutes), *Under the Sun* (Nully, 1999, 130 minutes).

Where: 3 Wenhuiyuanlu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District. **When:** March 21-30. **Admission:** 15-70 yuan. **Tel:** 62250916, 62254422.



Chinese Culture Club

White Pagoda Tour

Visit the Watchtower, the old city walls witness the downfall of the old neighbors. Take the last chance to see the local houses before they are gone forever.

Where: meet at 1:50pm at the north side of Dongbianmen Watchtower (where is Red Gate Gallery located), tell the driver: Dong (1) Bian (4) Men (2), Chongwen District.

When: March 30, Sat. 2-3:30pm. **Getting to know "Dream of Red the Mansion"**

Hosted by Zhou Ruchang, who is believed to be the most famous living scholar and critic in China on the novel. "The easiest, most straightforward and fun way to learn about and understand Chinese people and their culture is to read 'Hong Lou Meng (Dreams of Red Mansion)'," said Zhou. He will conduct the lecture in Chinese and English in some parts. English narration is provided. Free of charge.

Where: Cha Jia Fu Tea House with Shanxi antique furniture, next to Kongyiji Restaurant, Houhai area. Opposite to Madam Songqingling's Residence on the south side of the lake. **When:** March 23, Sat 2-4 pm. **Tel:** 84622081/13501035145 (contact Feng Cheng). **Website:** www.chinesecultureclub.org.



The map of Chajiafu Tea House

Performances

The Football Club

A drama about Chinese football.

Where: the Mini Theater of People's Art Theater. **When:** March 25 - April 16, 7:15pm. **Admission:** 80 yuan. **Tel:** 65250123.

Peking Opera

Every Saturday, Beijing Fenglei Opera Troupe will give a Peking Opera performance, as Xiao Shang He, Jiu Jiang Kou, etc. **When:** March 23, 2:30pm.

Every evening, Peking Opera perfor-

mances will be shown, as Shi Yu Zhuo, Ba Wang Bie Ji, Xiao Fang Niu, Qiu Jiang, etc. **When:** March 22-29, 7:30pm. **Where:** Huguang Guild Hall, 3 Hufanglu, Xuanwu District. **Admission:** 100-180 yuan, 200-380 yuan VIP. **Tel:** 63518284.

Opera: Nong Chen

Where: National Library Concert Hall, 33 Zhonguancun Nandajie, Haidian District. **When:** March 23, 2:30pm. **Admission:** 10-30 yuan. **Tel:** 88545348.

Music

The 9th Top Song Billboard Awards

Where: Capital Stadium. **When:** March 29, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 200-500 yuan. **Tel:** 65928449.

Music at Bars

Evening News, Get Lucky Bar, March 22, 9pm, 30 yuan, 64299109. Fish & Flower, Rhine River Bar, March 23, 9pm, 20,30 yuan, 82049579. Brainfailure, CD Cafe, March 24.

An Ear to the Ground - Beijing Talking

Beijing Talking's Bao Luo, and Su Fang bring their jazz and rock and roll roots to Beijing's stage. This is the first of Logistix's monthly concerts called "An Ear to the



Bao Luo

Ground". Prochers, Sanlitun North Bar Street, March 28, 84049602.

Premiere of Eton College Chapel Choir

Eton College Chapel Choir, which was founded in 1440. A part of their performance will be in Chinese.

Conductor: Ralph Allwood. Program: organ: J.S.Bash: Prelude & Fugue. choir: William Byrd: Civitas sancti tui; John Tavener (b 1994): The Lamb; Giles Swayne (b 1946): Magnificat; Benjamin Britten: Hymn to St. Cecilia; Malcolm Boyle (1902-1976): Thou, O God, art praised in Zion; Cornelius: The Three Kings. Two Chinese songs, popular choir arrangement. Choir & organ: Monteverdi: Beatus Vir, Handel: De Torrente from Dixit Dominus.

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall, Zhongshan Park. **When:** March 27, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 60-380 yuan, 500 yuan VIP. **Tel:** 65928449.

Symphonic Concert

By China Philharmonic Orchestra. Conductor: Yu Long. Cellist: Ma Xinhua. Program: Huang Zi: Reminiscence of the past; Andrew Lloyd Webber: Variation on Paganini's Themes; Bela Bartok: Concerto for Orchestra.

Where: Beijing Concert Hall. **When:** March 29, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 30-220 yuan. **Tel:** 66057006.

Activities



International Tropical Culture Festival

Tropical custom performance and the opening ceremony of the festival, March 23, 2-5pm. Movies night, March 24-29, 7:30pm. Violin concert, March 26, 7:30pm. Magic show, March 28, 7:30pm. The closing ceremony, March 29, 7:30pm.

Where: The Sun Crest Club, 25 Ganluyuan Nanli, Chaoyang District. **When:** March 23-29. **Tel:** 85263524.

The 2nd Anniversary of The Loft

One whole cow from the BBQ grill will be offered in the beer garden. Live entertainment and lucky draw. Enjoy a 50% discount on all food and beverage (except full bottle sales). **Where:** The Loft,

4 Gongtibeilu, Chaoyang District. **When:** March 30. **Tel:** 65017501, 65065637.

Fashion Show:

Hong Kong Fashion - Extravaganza In Beijing. Organized by Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the participant brands include Miss K, Virginia Lau, Kevin Yeung, Episode, DSC, Sunmark, Biba, etc, altogether 33 brands will be there. **Where:** Kerry Center, Guanghualu, Chaoyang District. **When:** March 26-30. **Tel:** 65101700.

YPHH - Young Professionals Happy Hour

Free beer. Live music. Meet old & new friends. **Where:** NYC Music Kitchen, 4F, Full Link Plaza, Chaowai Dajie. **When:** March 27, from 6:30pm.



Tropical Festival

Sports

King of the Mountain

A bike trip/race of 22km.

When: March 23. **Fee:** 10 yuan.

How to join: sign up at Wizheng Bike Shop (red roofed bike shop near Ritan Park) or send a mail at vlevbjing@mail.netchina.com.cn ASAP.

Super Football Fans?

The Club Football Bar, Beijing's pace-setting football, theme bar & restaurant. Big Screen. Exclusive memorabilia signed by some of the world's top players.

Mar 23, Saturday, 10:55pm, English Premiership match; Mar

24, Sunday, 9:55pm, Liverpool vs Chelsea; 11:55pm, Fulham vs Tottenham Hotspurs. All Live & English Premiership! **Add:** Club Football Bar, No. 10 Taip-ingzhuang, near Red House Hotel, Chunxiulu, Dongzhimenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District. **Tel:** 64150988/64167786.

Beijing Hash House Harriers - The Drinking Club with a Running Problem

Hares: Glenda and Ratchucker. **Where:** from Mexican Wave 2:30pm or Sino-Swiss Hotel 3pm. **Fee:** 100 yuan.

Dining out

The Great Taste of Coffee

Come and enjoy great flavored coffee. **Where:** Lobby Bar and Lounge, Hilton Hotel Beijing. **When:** Till April 4. **Tel:** 64662288-7304.



Abalone for dinner

Abalone for Dinner

Shark's fin soup.

Where: Dynasty Jade Garden, the State Guest Hotel Presidential Plaza. **When:** till March 31. **Fee:** 580 - 980 yuan. **Tel:** 68005588.

Guitar Serenades

The cafe will romance diners with a live guitarist singing country songs and love ballads. Free.

Where: Cabo Cafe, 24 Jianguomenwai Dajie, in the courtyard of Overseas Chinese Village, Chaoyang District. **When:** every Wednesday, Thursday. **Tel:** 65156826.

Leisurely Getaway

As all eight watering holes were sites of Buddhist temples, the emperors could not behave so freely as in their more famous imperial gardens.

by Jiang Zhong

The Beijing area water shortage has been around a while longer than you might think of. Emperors of old days enjoyed nothing more than racing off to the outskirts of the dry city to one of its eight natural springs.

Beijingers know the springs as the Ba Da Shui Yuan (Eight Great Water Yards). It was probably Jin Dynasty (1115-1234) Emperor Zhangzong (1190-1201) that transformed the whole exercise into a kind of Buddhist rite.

For students of Chinese, all eight are distinguishable by the distinct 院 “yuan” at the end of their names:

- Sheng Shui Yuan (圣水院 Yard of Holy Water)
- Xiang Shui Yuan (香水瓶 Yard of Fragrant Water)
- Jin Shui Yuan (金水院 Yard of Golden Water)
- Qing Shui Yuan (清水院 Yard of Clear Water)
- Tan Shui Yuan (潭水院 Yard of Pool Water)
- Quan Shui Yuan (泉水院 Yard of Spring Water)
- Shuang Shui Yuan (双水院 Yard of Tale Water)
- Ling Shui Yuan (灵水院 Yard of Miraculous Water)

As all eight were sites of Buddhist temples, the emperors could not behave so freely as in their more famous imperial gardens. They drank tea, wrote poems or composed paintings in the temple yards or “yuan”. This yuan is thus different to the 园 yuan” of 颐和园 (Yi He Yuan) or 圆明园 (Yuan Ming Yuan), signaling the emperors’ respect for Buddhism. All eight survive in one form or another today: six in Haidian District, one in Shijingshan and another in Mentougou.

Day tour to attractions

Tan Shui Yuan in the Fragrant Hill is nearest to town. Two springs supply water all year round. A rock beside them bears two Chinese characters “Shuang Qing” (双清 Double Clear Streams), the calligraphy of Emperor Qianlong (1736-1796).

After the Hebei Province flood of 1917, government official Xiong Xiling set up a charity school for orphaned children and built the Shuang Qing Villa on the temple ruins for his family. Mao Zedong lived here between March and November 1949 before coming down to Zhongnanhai. The villa has a Chinese language exhibition of Mao’s life. Originally an imperial garden, Xiang Shan Gong Yuan around the villa is a popular spring retreat.

Built in 1746, the Jing Yi garden was destroyed in 1860 by the Eight Allied Forces. It was said people who climb Gui Jian Chou (鬼见愁 Worry the Devil), the highest hill here, are protected from being



Ming Zhao Cave at Rui Yun An in the Sheng Shui Yuan once served as the hall of the temple



Entrance to Rui Yun An



Stone bridge at the tomb of Prince Chun (Xiang Shui Yuan)



Yu Yuan Tan Park



Pavilion at Tao Ran Ting Park

Divine Inspiration

Follow in footsteps of emperors around city’s watering holes



Prince Chun once supervised over the construction of the Summer Palace. He married the Empress Dowager Cixi’s younger sister Rong’er. His tomb followed the style of those of the Qing emperors

taken to hell by devils.

Northwest of Fragrant Hill stands the well-preserved Jade Cloud Temple (碧云寺 Bi Yun Si) with its 34.7-meter, Indian-style stupa of picture postcard familiarity. After Sun Yatsen’s death in 1925, his remains were stored in the rear hall of the temple, now Sun’s Memorial Hall. They were later moved to Nanjing.

Five hundred Arhat statues are housed in the southern hall. Statues of emperors Kangxi and Qianlong are also included. Number 295 is Kangxi. Number 360 is Qianlong.

Fragrant Hill Park can fill a long morning. If including Gui Jian Chou, add two more hours.

Getting to Fragrant Hill Park: Buses 333, 360 from the Summer Palace to the park

Open: park 6am-7pm; temple 8am-4pm

Admittance: park 5 yuan; villa 3 yuan; temple 10 yuan

For an afternoon, Sheng Shui Yuan and Xiang Shui Yuan are recommended. Rui Yun An (瑞云庵 Blessing Cloud Convent) stands on the ruins of Sheng Shui Yuan with a pagoda and ancient cave.

The 2-meter pagoda stands on a rock on the right of the ruins of the nunnery’s main entrance.

The seven-story pagoda is decorated with stone carvings.

Behind the ruins, the Ming Zhao (明照 lightning) Cave has stories. It was said the cave had three chambers, with treasure hidden in the last. A shrine and a dry well are found in the first two chambers. But stones block the entrance to the last. Locals say vipers protect the last.

To the south stands a must for a one-day tour: Xiang Shui Yuan. Fa Yun Si (Magic Cloud Temple) was originally built here in the Tang Dynasty (618-907). In 1868, the temple was rebuilt into the tomb of Prince Chun (seventh son of the Emperor Daoguang, 1821-1851). The construction was finished in 1874. The owner moved in in 1890.

A stone bridge, tablet pavilion, steep steps and ancient pines lend the tomb site a mysterious air.

Li Yunfu, 74, spent his childhood in the village nearby. He said the tomb was robbed by Dongbei warlord Zhao Da in the winter of 1937.

Zhao corroded the stone block with sulfuric acid, Li said. Villagers had a chance to see the underground chamber the next day. The red painted coffin gleamed. Spring water ran through two channels either side of the coffin.

Getting to Xiang Shui Yuan:

Return to the Summer Palace after Fragrant Hill, then bus 346 to Cao Chang (草厂). Walk along the opposite mountain path one kilometer to Xiang Shui Yuan (the path begins at Haidian Boiler Factory 海淀锅炉厂).

Tip: The apricots by the path blossom this time of year.

Getting to Sheng Shui Yuan: Return to the bus stop; take bus 346 to Che Er Ying (车尔营). A mountain road runs across the village. Walk along the road 40 minutes to Sheng Shui Yuan.

Tips: two old pine trees en route catch the eye.

Badly damaged or occupied by governmental departments, the remaining yuans don’t deserve a visit.

Private Gardens to Public Parks

After 1949, the emperors’ proprietary gardens and even their homes were opened to the public. The most famous include Beihai, Jingshan, the Summer Palace, the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven and Zhongshan Park, a part of the Forbidden City.

The government also restored another 29 parks. Each offers a leisurely getaway and spring tour. The following are recom-

mended for this spring:

Tao Ran Ting Park (陶然亭公园) Park of pavilions

Tao Ran – an easy life – from the poem of Tang Dynasty poet Bai Juyi. Thirty-six pavilions are in the park, 10 borrowed from outer provinces. The Tao Ran Pavilion was built by Qing artisan Jiang Zao in 1695.

Where: 19 Tai Ping Jie (太平街), Xuanwu District

Open: 6am-9pm

Admittance: 2 yuan

Ling Long Park (玲珑公园) Park of exquisite design

In 1576, Ming (1368-1644) Emperor Shenzong built Ci Shan (kindness and mercy) Temple to celebrate his mother’s 60th birthday. Twelve pagodas were once here. Fire burnt down 11 and the temple itself in 1875. The 60-meter, 13-story survivor has 3,000 chimes. Complex carvings adorn the pagoda. All those below the third story were damaged during the Cultural Revolution.

Where: Ci Shan Si, Ba Li Zhuang (八里庄), Haidian District

Admittance: free

Yu Yuan Tan Park (玉渊潭公园) Park of cherry blossom

The park came into being during the Jin Dynasty (1115-1234). Emperor Zhangzong (1190-1201) who developed the Eight Great

Water Yards, fished here every spring and summer in one of the three lakes. Emperor Qianlong built a temporary palace, today’s Diaoyutai Guesthouse, in the northeast. Every April, the park is stuffed with cherry-blossom admirers.

Where: north of the military museum, or behind the CCTV building

Open: 6am-8pm

Admittance: 2 yuan (might be higher during cherry-blossom festival)

Shuang Xiu Park (双秀公园) Park of Japanese style

Built in 1984, the park serves as the symbol of communication between China and Japan. The Cui Shi (Jade Stone) Garden houses artificial hills and complexes made in Japan.

Where: Ma Dian (马甸), Beisanhuan Xilu, Xicheng District

Open: 6am-9:30pm

Admittance: 0.2 yuan

Liu Yin Park (柳荫公园) Park of willows

Seventy varieties of willow inhabit spring, summer, autumn and winter gardens. Residences of South China style scatter the park.

Where: Huangsi Dajie (黄寺大街), Dongcheng District

Open: 6am-9pm

Admittance: 1 yuan

Beautiful City of Rare Minorities

Chinawide



Residence built over the Tuo River

by Jiang Zhong

New Zealand poet Rewi Alley (1897-1987) said that Fenghuang (凤凰) of western Hunan was one of the two most beautiful cities in China (the other being Changting, Fujian).

Tujia, Miao and Han nationalities inhabit Fenghuang. The old city stands by the Tuo River. Locally dubbed diao jiao lou (吊脚楼 bracket tower), stilted residences reach out over the river.

Beside the towers stands the north entrance to the city. A bridge in front of the entrance links the north and south banks of the river.

The bridge once featured only loose planks. Locals had to jump from one plank to another to cross the river, hence the name Tiao Yan (Stepping Stone). Even today, people must turn sideways to pass each other if they meet at the middle.

Built in 1615, a 190-kilometer defensive wall, Bian Qiang (side wall), surrounds the city mostly on mountain ridges. During the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the Miao nationality refused to be governed by the imperial court.

Conflicts broke out. The Ming government built the wall to isolate the Miao from surrounding nation-

alities. Great Wall researcher Luo Zhewen argued the wall at Fenghuang proved the existence of a southern Great Wall.

The ancient Huang Si Qiao (黄丝桥 Yellow Thread Bridge) City, 30 kilometers west of Fenghuang, has also witnessed conflicts in the Ming Dynasty. Built in 686 (Tang Dynasty), the city once served as the most important pass of the Southern Great Wall. Watchtowers at four entrances are all preserved as attractions for tourists.

Shanjiang (山江) Village, 23 kilometers from Fenghuang, presents typical Miao customs. Every third

and eighth day of the month according to the Chinese lunar calendar, a fair is held. Locals in traditional costume gather in the village center.

Getting to Fenghuang: Train to Changsha, then bus to Ji Shou (吉首), capital of Hunan Xiangxi Miao and Tujia autonomous regions; one more bus to Fenghuang (6 yuan, 6am-8pm daily).

Getting to Huang Si Qiao: Taxi (Santana) to the city, 80 yuan; or minibus to Alaying (2 yuan), then taxi to the city (10 yuan).

Getting to Shanjiang Village: Bus from Fenghuang to the village (3 yuan)